

A
DIALOGUE
BETWIXT TWO
PROTESTANTS,

(In Answer to a
Popish Catechism,

CALLED,

A Short Catechism against all Sectaries)

Plainly shewing,

That the Members of the Church of *ENG-
LAND* are no Sectaries but true Catholicks;
and that our Church is a sound part of Christ's
Holy Catholick Church, in whose Communion
therefore the people of this Nation are most strict-
ly bound in Conscience to remain.

In Two Parts.

*If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye
have received, let him be accursed, Gal. 1. 9.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Samuell Tidmarsh*, at the *Kings-Head* in
Cornhill, next House to the *Royal Exchange*, 1685.



THE PREFACE.

I Do not think there needs any excuse to be made for answering a Book written against our Religion: If there were, I could truly produce that common one of being put upon it by Friends. For it's now more than a year since some very worthy Friends (to whom my Obligations are too great to dispute their Commands) did put into my hands a little Popish Book, called, A Short Catechism against all Sectaries, said to be Translated by C. M. desiring me to write a plain Answer thereto by way of Dialogue, such as might be fitted for the capacities of common people. In obedience to whom I presently betook my self to the work, wherein I have proceeded very slowly, being daily interrupted with other employments. But now at length having finish'd it, I present it to the World, heartily wishing it may have a success answerable to the truth and goodness of the cause I maintain, and to the design both of my self in Writing and Publishing it, and of my Friends in putting me upon it.

The Preface.

I am not so vain as to pretend to have said any thing new on a Subject so very common, and which for a long time hath exercised the Pens of very many persons of greatest Wit and Learning, both in our own and other Nations. Let it suffice, what I hope without any vanity may be said, that I think I have here delivered certain and solid Truth in plain and easie Words, that even he that runs may read and understand the same. I can also truly add, that in answering this my Popish Author, I have used all manner of honest and fair dealing, as becomes a sincere Lover of Truth. I have not indeed always followed him word for word, especially not in his second and third Chapters, in the former of which he endeavours to prove, That Protestants have not the marks of a true Church; in the latter, That the Church of Rome hath them. These two I have handled together, and though I have left out much of his reviling Language, which I thought needed no answer, nor deserved any notice; yet I do not know that I have past over any one Argument either there or in any other place. Some perhaps may look on it as a fault that I have often followed him too punctually, which has occasioned the frequent repetition of the same things, but this may be useful to some Readers. If I have not every where quoted his very words (as for the most part I have done) yet I am sure I have never willingly misrepresented

The Preface.

presented his sense, nor proposed his Arguments with disadvantage, but rather have added what I thought might give strength thereto. And as I know not that I have any where overlooked one Argument without answering it, so neither have I returned any answer, but what in my Conscience I thought to be just and true, and with which my own mind is well satisfied. I have not so confined my self to this Author, but that I have also taken notice of some other points which he never mentions. And though I may be far enough from having spoken to all that are in controversy betwixt us and the Church of Rome, yet I think I have not wholly omitted those which are of greatest weight. At least, I am well assured that I have said enough to satisfy any considering impartial person, that there is not the least reason, why any Man should depart from the Communion of the Church of England, and betake himself to that of Rome: Since the Romish Church has no manner of Authority over us, and is moreover guilty of retaining and imposing such gross and dangerous Errors and Corruptions, as render her Communion utterly unlawful and unsafe, even to those who have been born and bred in her bosom. How unreasonable then is it for us to revolt to her? And indeed my chief design in this undertaking is to confirm those of our own Church in strict Communion with it, having little
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The Preface.

hope of bringing over many Profelytes from the Church of Rome. Where I can expect but few Readers, I must not look for many Converts. Those Guides who are not willing to trust their People with the Holy Scriptures, which yet they say are on their side, will be less willing they should read the Books of those whom they account their Enemies; and too oft they account us so, as the Jews did our Saviour, merely for telling them the truth. But if any of that Persuasion should be so ingenious as to give this little Book a fair Reading, and shall bring along with him a mind as free from passion and prejudice as the Author had in Writing it, I dare say that it will either persuade him to become a Member of our most excellent Church, or at least convince him, that we who are already so, have great reason not to depart from it: Since this our departure, beside all other faults involved in it, would render us guilty of an apparent Schism. And this guilt I reckon is most justly chargeable on the Papists amongst us: And not on them only, but also on those Protestant Dissenters (as they are commonly called) of what Denomination soever, who separate from us into distinct Societies, which they set up in opposition to our Church as by Law established. For if in this Church all things needful to Salvation are afforded, and no sinful condition imposed, then do they make a causeless, sinful separation,
who

The Preface.

who withdraw from its Communion. Neither can these our Dissenters justly plead the same Arguments for their Separation from us, that our Church can for its withdrawing from the Church of Rome, or rather for Reforming her self from the corruptions of that Church, as I have briefly shewn toward the end of this Treatise. They who would see this more fully demonstrated, let them read a Discourse which purposely handles this Subject, being one of the Cases lately Written, as is said, by some of the London Ministers. And indeed I scarce know any Books that I would sooner recommend to the Common Reader, for his direction in these matters, than all those Discourses, which treat of the several points in difference betwixt our Church, and the Non-conformists, and also of some of those betwixt us and the Papists: And are generally Written with such clearness of judgment, and with such calmness and good temper, as may render them more acceptable and more useful, through God's Blessing, to those for whose sake they were Written.

But whilst we are thus engaged in disputes and controversies, let us look well to the temper of our minds, and take great care that we lose not peace or charity, whilst we are inquiring after and contending for the truth. Let us have as great an aversion as we will from the errors, the ill principles and practices of any sort of men; but let us

The Preface.

not have the least enmity to their persons upon any pretence whatever. Let us pity them, and pray for them, and do all we can in our several places to instruct them, to reduce and reform them: but let us not hate or envy them, not rail upon or revile them, not wish them or do them any hurt, nor rejoyce in any mischief that befalls them, nor vex our selves at their prosperity, or with the fears and forethoughts of it. Let us not fret our selves in any wise to do evil.

For that end above all let us take heed of such a fierce and furious zeal as tends to disturb the peace of Church and State. That's no true zeal for Religion which produces such ill effects, but rather a zeal for opinions and parties, or for outward advantages, and proceeds from pride, envy, revenge, distrust of God, and such like evil principles. But the wisdom which is from above is pure and peaceable. True Religion inspires the breasts of men with meekness and patience, humility and charity, renders them calm and quiet, gentle and tractable, easie to be intreated, and easie to be governed. Next to piety to God, what greater duty of Religion than Loyalty to our Prince as the Minister of God? How then can Religion be exprest or promoted by Sedition and Rebellion, any more than by cursing and swearing, and such like profaneness? He that talks of rebelling for his Religion, has lost what he contends for before he begins the contest. For what Religion has he who resists the

The Preface.

the Ordinance of God? And this (as we are taught by God himself) he does who resists that lawful authority which God hath set over him. But we must shew that we Fear God by Honouring the King, and loving all men, especially our Christian Brethren. This is the language of Holy Scripture, and this is the Doctrine of our Church.

Let us then live in peaceable Communion with this Church, and let us in all respects behave our selves in so loyal and dutiful a manner toward our King, as she instructs and obliges us to do; even so that we may deserve the Character, which one of the Ancients in his Apology for the Christians, gives of them, viz. That a Christian is an enemy to no man, much less to his Prince. Thus ought we to practise if we will be true to our profession. For the Religion of our Church (as I have often said and fully proved in the following Discourse) is no other than the Christian Religion, the very same which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles taught, without either Popish or Phana-tical corruptions and additions.

And as in other points, so particularly in this obedience to Magistrates, she inculcates what Christ hath commanded, Give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsars; and that of St. Paul, Let every soul be subject to the higher Powers, &c. even Bishops and Priests as well as Lay-men; and this not only for wrath but conscience sake. Or as St. Peter, Submit to every ordinance of man

The Preface.

for the Lords-sake. This was the Doctrine and practice of the Apostles, and of the Primitive Christians in the first and purest ages, when they had the greatest temptations to the contrary even in times of hottest persecution; and this not for want of strength (as Bellarmine to their great dishonour, would have it thought, Lib. 5. de Rom. Pont. Cap. 7.) but out of obedience to Gods commands and faith in his promises. But in succeeding ages of greater prosperity, as the Church declined from her purity in many other respects, so also in point of subjection and obediense to Governours. Then began Prelates to contend with Princes, and the Pope to set himself against, yea above the Emperour. Then by degrees he claim'd a power of deposing even Kings for what he shall judg heresie, and of absolving Subjects from their Allegiance, (which by the way, Bellarmine very finely compares to that power which the spirit ought to have over the flesh. (Lib. 5. de Rom. Pontif. Cap. 6.) Then were the Clergy exempted from the jurisdiction of the Civil Magistrate, with many other encroachments upon the rights of Princes, which they of the Church of Rome were especially guilty of. But it was the design of our pious Reformers to remove these as well as other abuses, and to restore Religion to its Primitive purity as far as possible. And this they have done, as in many other instances, so particularly in asserting the just power and prerogative of Kings; strictly obli-

The Preface.

obliging all the members of this Church, whether Clergy or Laity, to yield all that homage and honour, that obedience and subjection, which by the plain dictates of reason and nature; and by the express Laws of God in Holy Scripture, are most justly due to them. And as it was the glory of the Primitive Church, so has it been of ours, ever since the happy time of her Reformation, that she hath always maintained her Loyalty and Allegiance untainted and unshaken. And hath fixed it on such principles as will make it firm and steady in all times, and under all Princes, on such as made the Primitive Christians obedient to their Emperours, whether Heathen or Christian, Arrian or Orthodox; even on the principles of Religion and Obedience to Almighty God, who hath set up Kings as his Vicegerents, and hath expressly commanded us to reverence and obey them as such, threatening damnation to them that resist, and promising an eternal Kingdom of Glory to the meek and peaceable, and to the patient sufferer for righteousness sake. This, I say, is Primitive Christianity, and this is the true Protestant Doctrine of our Church, taught by our first Reformers, and by their genuine successors ever since. So that it seems not without reason that several learned men make this a chief distinguishing character of a True Protestant (without an Irony) that he owns the Kings Supremacy, as our Church has defined it. I am sure he that denies it, so far

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The Preface.

agrees with the Papists. Wherefore if we would restore due honour to the name of Protestant, which by the abuse of pretenders, hath of late been exposed to derision and contempt, let us live according to the Doctrine of our Church; whilst we profess our selves zealous for Protestant Religion, and cry out bitterly against Popery, let us take heed of embracing some of the vilest principles and practices of it, such as were broached and maintain'd chiefly by their furious Hildebrands, and some of the worst men amongst them, I mean their Doctrine of resisting and rebelling against lawful Sovereigns upon pretence of Religion and the honour of God, for the defence of his Church, and the carrying on his cause. The Holy God needs not the wickedness of men to defend any cause of his; nor is Religion like to be secured by irreligious means; nor Gods honour promoted by a contempt of his authority in disobeying his commands. True Religion will make us impartial and uniform in the performance of our duty, and teach us to have a respect to all Gods Commandments, to the fifth as well as to the first or second; so that we shall no more dare to rebell against our lawful Sovereign, and set up an Usurper, than to disown the true God, and worship an Idol.

But I have been longer on this Subject than I intended, and therefore shall hasten to conclude this Preface as I have done my Book, with a most serious

The Preface.

rious and earnest exhortation to the Reader, that above all things he be careful to lead an universally religious and good life, giving in the first place to God the things that are Gods, and then to Cæsar the things that are his. Let God be all in all to our souls, and let his authority wholly govern and sway us in the whole course of our lives. Let us study to know his will as he has plainly revealed it in his holy Word, and let us most strictly and faithfully comply with it in all things. Never let the hopes of any worldly advantage, or the fear of any loss or suffering draw us into the wilful commission of any sin, or into the wilful neglect of our duty. Neither the commands of the greatest Monarch, nor the example of the multitude will be any excuse for going against the light of Gods Word, and our own Consciences. There is not the least doubt of it but that God must be obeyed rather than man, when their commands do indeed thwart and contradict each other. Gods favour is more to be desired than all the riches and honours of the world, and his wrath more to be feared than all the miseries and sufferings of this life. What will it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own soul? But as no pretence of Loyalty and Obedience to Kings will at any time justify our breach of Gods commands, who is the King of Kings, so neither will the pretence of Religion any more warrant our resistance of lawful authority. If we cannot obey

The Preface.

with a good conscience, then we ought to suffer with quietness and patience. This is every where the Lesson which the Gospel teaches, and which is more especially recommended to us by the example of our Blessed Lord and Master; and if ever we hope to live and reign with him hereafter, we must now deny our selves and take up our cross and follow him; even in meekness and patience must we follow him as well as in righteousness and mercy, purity and temperance, or any other graces. Tea by this means we shall best consult for the present safety and honour both of our selves and our Religion. Who will (or what can) harm us if we be followers of that which is good? This will incline Kings to be Nursing Fathers to the Church, when the Church trains up her Children in obedience to God and the King. Above all, this will procure the blessing and favour of Almighty God, wherein consists all our safety and felicity. We may hope still to enjoy his Presence and his Gospel, whilst we bring forth such good fruits of it, and walk worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing. He will continue our peace and prosperity so far as he sees good for us, and will suffer nothing to befall us but what shall make for the interest of Religion and our own truest advantage. Say to the righteous it shall be well with him, whether in peace and prosperity, or in sufferings and adversity. But let us remember St. Peter's advice (1 Pet. 4. 15.) to beware of suffering as busie

The Preface.

busie bodies or evil doers, as factious and seditious, as Rebels and Traytors. They only who suffer for righteousness sake may glorifie God on that behalf. They alone with confidence may commit themselves to him, who are exercised in well-doing.

To him therefore, the only wise, the great and good God, let us freely and chearfully commit both our souls and bodies and all our concerns, whether publick or private: banishing from our minds those faintings and despondencies, those fears and jealousies, which first disturb the peace of our own breasts, and then too often that of the publick. Let us but see to do our own duty with faithfulness and diligence, and then let us possess our souls in patience, being assured that all the ways of God are mercy and truth; and all his Providences how strange soever they may seem to us, shall in the issue sweetly conspire to fulfill his promises, and accomplish his designs of love to all that truly fear and serve him. Let us look well to the Government of our own spirits and passions, of our tongues and our lives, and then let us leave the Government of the world to the God that made it, who is the absolute Lord and Ruler over all, in whose hands are all the hearts and the affairs of men, and who can turn and order all as he will, and he will do what he sees best and most conducing to the glory of his own name, and the good of his Church, which is a thousand times dearer to him than it
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The Preface.

can be to us. Wherefore let us sincerely make Gods Glory our End, and his Word our Rule, and continue stedfast in communion with our Church which teaches us so to do, and then we can never be utterly defeated, nor need we ever be much dejected. Truth and goodness are most strong and invincible things, and will certainly at last prevail and triumph over error and wickedness. And all that do with courage and honesty engage in their service shall never receive any real hurt, but are certain to come off with victory and honour. Even now the spirit of God and of glory resteth upon them, and dwelleth in them, filling them with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And at length they shall be exalted to those glories and joys, those Crowns and Scepters, which are reserved in Heaven for Christian conquerors, even for such as have managed their warfare, and gain'd their conquests, not by disturbing the peace, nor by doing evil to any man, but by patient suffering of evil done to them, and by patient continuance in well-doing.

THE

THE
CONTENTS.

PART I.

CHAP. I.

CConcerning the True Church and the marks of
it, and first of its Unity. Page 1

CHAP. II.

Of the second Mark of the True Church, viz.
Holiness. pag. 14

CHAP. III.

Of the third Mark of the True Church, that it's
Catholick. pag. 33

CHAP. IV.

Of the fourth Mark of the True Church, that it is
Apostolick. P. 41

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. V.

*Of some particular points in difference betwixt us
and the Church of Rome, and first, of the
Popes Supremacy.*

p. 48

CHAP. VI.

*Of Purgatory and Prayers for the Dead, and In-
dulgences.*

p. 65

CHAP. VII.

Of Transubstantiation.

p. 75

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Sacrifice of the Mass.

p. 102

CHAP. IX.

Of having Prayers in an unknown Tongue.

p. 105

CHAP. X.

*Concerning Confession of Sins to the Priest, in order
to his forgiveness of them.*

p. 109

CHAP. XI.

Of Invocation of Saints.

p. 119

CHAP. XII.

Of the Worship of Images.

p. 129
CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Praying by Beads. p. 142

CHAP. XIV.

Of Distinction of Meats. p. 148

CHAP. XV.

*Of withholding the Scriptures from the Common-
People.* p. 152

PART II.

CHAP. I.

C*ontaining an Answer to some Arguments a-
gainst Protestants.* p. 167

CHAP. II.

*A Resolution of some Doubts and Questions pro-
posed to Protestants.* 190

CHAP. III.

*An Answer to some Propositions said to be unan-
swerable by Protestants.* p. 200

CHAP.

The CONTENTS.

CHAP. IV.

*An Answer to a pretended Demonstration, That
the Roman Church is the True Catholick
Church.*

P. 225

CHAP. V.

*Of the number of Sacraments, with some other
things briefly discust, and the conclusion of the
whole.*

P. 239

A
DIALOGUE
BETWIXT TWO
PROTESTANTS,

(In Answer to a
Popish Catechism,
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A Short Catechism against all Sectaries.)

PART I.

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DIALOGUE

BETWIXT A

Teacher and a Learner.

1766.

CHAP. I.

*Concerning the true Church and the marks of it,
and first of its Unity.*

Learner. **S**IR, I live in a place where there are many of those who call themselves Roman Catholicks: and though I care not much for disputing with them, for I seldom find anything comes of it but anger and ill words, yet I cannot always avoid it: For some of them are my near Relations, and they sometimes put Books into my hands, and sometimes bring their Priest along with them to convince me; and are still earnestly urging me to change my Religion, and to forsake the Church of Eng-
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land, telling me plainly that no Salvation is to be had out of the Church of Rome.

Teacher. That I know is their common Doctrine, but it is so very unreasonable, and so horridly uncharitable, that this alone were enough to keep a man from becoming a Papist; since if he thorowly embrace their principles, he must condemn all but those of their own way. And believe it, they had need to consider well how they can hope for mercy themselves, who pass so severe a sentence upon others. But thanks be to God, whatever they talk of St. Peters Keys, they are not hereafter to be our Judges, nor are salvation and damnation at their disposing. That God who will judge both us and them according to his own Gospel, will one day justify and acquit thousands whom they have condemned. And therefore never be daunted by their insolent language and heavy censures. The very same you may sometimes hear from Quakers and others of the vilest Sects. For still the less reason, the more wrath and confidence, that by bold and threatening talk they may fright people into their way, when they want good Arguments to persuade them.

L. I believe it is so, yet I'll confess to you I am sometimes a little puzzled with some of their subtle discourses: and therefore I would desire you to furnish me with plain answers to the chief of those arguments which they commonly insist on. These I think I can pretty well remember, having heard them so often; but to help my memory, I have brought with me a little Book wherein they are contained, and from thence shall propose them.

T. I shall readily give you my assistance herein: Let me hear then how do they use to assault you?

L. Those I have met with do commonly begin with telling me (as I find it here also in some of the first pages of

of this their book) That there is but one Lrd and one Faith, one Religion, and one Church, wherein a man can be saved, as there was but one Ark of Noah, wherein he and his family were preserved.

T. We easily grant that there is one true Religion; even that which Christ hath revealed, and is therefore called the Christian Religion; and there is one Catholick Church, viz. the whole body of Christian people who embrace this Religion. But there are many particular Churches which hold this same Faith, as of old the Church of Jerusalem, of Antioch, &c. so now of England, of Scotland, &c. What then can they infer hence to their purpose?

L. That as Turks and Jews cannot be saved, so no more can Hereticks.

T. It still beileems us to be more careful for the saving of our own souls, than hasty in condemning of others. Wherefore let us leave the condition of such who never heard the Gospel, nor had any opportunity of hearing it, to the wise and just Judge of all the Earth, who will do right to all. As for Hereticks, they are such as deny some essential part of the Christian Faith, and therefore properly speaking are not Christians. But what's all this to us.

L. They say that we of the Church of England are Hereticks, out of the Catholick Church, and therefore cannot be saved.

T. Say it they commonly do, but are never able to prove it, since we believe the whole Religion of our blessed Saviour contained in the holy Scriptures: We receive the ancient Creeds of the Church wherein is contained the summ of this Religion. How then are we Hereticks?

L. Because we are not of the Roman Church, which is the congregation of those who own the Bishop of Rome

to be *Christ's Vicar*, and the visible Head of his Church upon earth, which congregation they say is the *Catholick Church*, and the only true way to salvation, and they who are not of this communion are *Hereticks and Sectaries*.

T. This is the current Popish Doctrine, but had it been the opinion of the Primitive Church in the Apostles days or soon after, surely they would have given some such a definition as this of the Catholick Church, or at least have call'd it the *Roman Catholick Church*; (as Papists now do) but its neither so called in the Creed, nor this Article so explained by any Christian Writer in those days or long after.

L. Who then are to be reckoned as members of the *Catholick Church*?

T. Even all good Christians through the whole world that do sincerely believe and obey the Gospel of our blessed Saviour. These are the true members of his Church, and all who profess to do so are the outward visible members of this Catholick Church. And in this sense we acknowledg (with your Author) that Christ hath always had a visible Church on Earth, and will be with it to the end of the world, nor shall the Gates of Hell be able to prevail against it. Nor do we say (as he charges us) that the whole Church has been lost or put out; but particular Churches in this place or that, as at *Jerusalem*, at *Rome* or any other-where, may fall into great decay, and at length into utter ruin. Yet still Christ will have a Church upon earth, still there will be men professing Christianity, to whom both Heathens, Jews, and all Infidels ought to joyn themselves.

L. Since then the *Catholick Church* signifies the whole Society of Christian people where ever scattered over the face of the earth, it hence appears that they who assert the
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Church of Rome to be this Catholick Church, do thereby declare that there are no true Christians in the world but the Papists (as we use to call them) which seems to me very strange Doctrine. But yet may not a particular Church be in some sense stiled Catholick?

T. Yes p^roperly enough as it is a part of the Catholick Church, holding the same faith with it, and not schismatically dividing from it. And thus of old the Church of *Rome* might be stiled Catholick, and so might the Church of *Ephesus*, of *Antioch*, or any other place, to distinguish them from Hereticks and Schismaticks, that made factions and parties in their severall Churches, and separated from their own lawful Bishops and Pastors.

L. Are not those Christian Churches which are commonly called Reformed Churches, parts of the Catholick Church?

T. Yes, they are the best and soundest parts of it.

L. But why are they called Protestant and Reformed?

T. Not to trouble you with the first particular occasion of the name Protestant, they are now generally stiled so because they protest against the errors and corruptions of the *Roman* Church, and have Reformed themselves from the same, according to the primitive pattern laid down in holy Scripture. So that when you hear tell of the Protestant Religion, or Reformed Religion, you are not to understand thereby any new Religion distinct from Christianity, but only the old Christian Religion in its native simplicity and purity, separate from all Popish additions. Nor do we say (as I have told you) that the Church was lost and now lately found out; but this we say, that it was greatly corrupted, especially in these Western

parts of the world, over which the Bishops of *Rome* had by ill arts usurped an authority. From which Usurpation our Rulers most justly and regularly delivered themselves, and afterwards with great care and consideration reformed our Church from those corruptions which were chiefly introduced and supported by that authority.

L. But they of that Church use to tell us (and so does my Author here) that all who are not of their communion are *Sectaries*, to whom by no means do agree the marks of the true Church, which yet they say are all of them evidently to be found in theirs.

T. Nothing more common than for adversaries to give one another very ill names, and that shall serve for half a confutation amongst ignorant people. But names alter not the nature of things. And as zealously as they of *Rome* do affect the name of *Catholicks*, I doubt not but upon search they will be found as notorious *Sectaries* as any in Christen 'dom, whilst many of those whom they brand with that infamous title will appear to be true *Catholick Christians*, if there now be, or ever were any such in the world. And in order to the proof of this, pray let me hear what are those marks of the true Church?

L. They are said to be chiefly four, that it is *One, Holy, Catholick, and Apostolick Church*; and this, say they, cannot be said of any *Protestant Church*, and therefore not of our Church of *England*, which is by them reckoned among *Sectaries*.

T. By these marks let us be tried. Only take notice that no one particular Church can be stiled the *Catholick Church*, as if a part was the whole. But I say the Church of *England* (which we are now chiefly concern'd to vindicate) is a true and sound part of this *One, Holy, Catholick and Apostolick Church*, and all
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the marks of a true Church do much more clearly and fully agree to it than to the Church of *Rome*. But let me hear what they object to the contrary.

L. First they say it is not One, that is, it is not united because there are so many divisions in it. Some will be Protestants, some Presbyterians, others Independents, Anabaptists, Quakers, &c. Nor can they be one, whilst they acknowledg not one Head to determine controversies. Whilst on the other hand the Papists pretend that they have this one Head, one Faith, the same Sacraments, and so are all of one Religion, and therefore having so much unity, are to be own'd by this mark for the true Church, &c.

T. In answer to this consider (1) That it cannot with any pretence of reason or Scripture be made the mark of a true Church, that there shall be no divisions in it. For were there not some to be found in the best and purest Churches immediately planted by the Apostles themselves? As particularly in the Church of *Corinth*, for which they are severely reprov'd, 1 *Cor.* 1. 10, 11, &c. (2) Much less doth it become those of the Church of *Rome* to accuse others of divisions, who have more and greater amongst themselves than can be found, I believe, in any other Church in Christendom. They talk of one Head, but sometimes they have had two or three Popes at once, and that for several years together. They are divided in points fundamental to their own Church, as whether the Pope be above a General Council, or the Council above the Pope. Nor are they any more agreed where the Infallibility of which they boast so much, is seated, than about the Supremacy; whether it be in the Pope, or in a General Council, or in both together: Yea, some say 'tis neither in one or the other, nor in both united, as considered apart from the rest, but in the whole body of the faithful, as by them Religion is

convey'd from one generation to another. And are they not much better for an Infallible Judg of controversies, whilst they are not yet agreed who he is, and where this Infallibility is to be found? In a multitude of other points are they divided, as learned Writers of our Church have shewn at large; and with great probability have some asserted that they hardly agree universally amongst themselves in any Doctrines but those wherein they agree with us. (3) But again were they never so well united amongst themselves, yet is this but the agreement of a Sect with it self, and is far from proving them to be therefore the Catholick Church, or any sound part of it. As if suppose all the *Quakers* were perfectly agreed together in all opinions, and imagin their number was as great as the Papists, are they therefore to be reckoned the Catholick Church, because forsooth they are *One* amongst themselves? Surely no, since by their errors and their schism they divide themselves from all other Christians. Thus whilst Papists are united in owning the Pope to be Christs Vicar on earth, and the supreme visible Head over the whole Christian Church, they do hereby only make a sect or faction, let their number be never so great. And by this means as well as many other ill opinions and practices, which are imposed on the members of their Church, they do separate themselves from all other Christians in the world, who disown this Universal Headship of the Pope with the rest of their errors.

L. But they boast much of the Union of their Church, because say they, go where you will, you shall find the same Worship, the same Mass, and this frequented in all places, where their Church is owned, by the members of it.

T. Still this is but an Union amongst themselves; such, I say, as any party may have. Quakers for instance

stance may go to *Quakers* Meetings where ever they travel, and yet still remain a Schismatical party. And though I lay no great stress upon it, yet formerly even in the Church of *Rome* (however it is now with them) they have had much variety in their publick Offices, according to the different Usages of different places. But still I say, be they never so perfectly agreed in their own way of worship as well as in Doctrine, there is nothing in this to prove them the *One Catholick Church*: Nay it does not so much as prove them to be *One* with it as a sound part thereof, except their Doctrine and Worship be such as agrees with that of the Catholick Church in all ages. For any party I have told you may agree amongst themselves, even whilst they are schismatically divided from others.

L. *But they say our Church of England is not thus united because many separate from her Prayers and Sacraments.*

T. And what, is there no Unity therefore amongst the members of our Church, because there are some who through peevishness, weakness, or any other cause separate from it? Does not the main body of the people of this Kingdom, through Gods mercy, joyn in Religious communion, and can freely resort to any Parish Church where they happen to be? If some that live in the Nation will not thus joyn, is that an argument against the union of those that do? In some Popish Countries are there not many thousands who separate from the Church of *Rome*? And do they take that for a good reason to prove them not to be united who joyn with it? I trow not but yet it may do much to prove there is little true union amongst them, to consider by what means they are held together, viz. partly by force and violence (at least in many places) and partly by keeping the people in ignorance.

rance. And is it not a fine kind of union, think you, to have men chain'd together in Iron fetters, and kept in a dark Dungeon, where they are not able to stir a foot from each other, had they never so much mind? And had the people in *Italy* and *Spain* but more light and more liberty, you would quickly see what vast numbers would depart from their communion there, as they have done in other places. But ignorance is the bond of their union as well as the mother of their Devotion.

L. Yet is there nothing more common with them than to cry up the Unity of their Church, and to exclaim against the divisions which they say are in ours.

T. They exclaim against them, whilst more ways than one they endeavour to promote them. They use also their utmost arts to aggravate and enhance them, and make them be thought much greater than they are, whilst they cunningly endeavour to lessen and conceal those amongst themselves, which yet I reckon to be far greater than even those betwixt our Church and the generality of such as dissent from it. And sometimes these their differences have been managed with as much heat and violence, and have produced fighting and bloodshed, as you will find largely related in the most learned *Dr. Stillingfleet's* Discourse on that subject. But besides this, certainly the Papists of all people have little reason to cry out against Schismatics and Sectaries, since they themselves will be found to be as great Schismatics as any at this day amongst us, and as dangerous too, if we may judge of them by their principles. For besides that the whole Popish Church may justly be accounted Schismatical in dividing it self from the rest of Christendom (of which more hereafter) those of them who live amongst us do wholly separate from our Church and pass

pass a much more heavy doom upon us than I think most of our other Sectaries do. For these do generally acknowledg the Church of *England* to be a true Church, and grant her Doctrine to be sound and good, and profess to hold communion with us in faith and love, whilst they withdraw from us on account of some Modes and Ceremonies in Divine Worship. Thus it is with many of them, but now the Papists do plainly declare against our Church and Ministers, that we have no true Faith nor Sacraments, nor Christian virtue or piety, but are cursed Hereticks in the most miserable state of damnation. And all this chiefly because we submit not to the usurpation of a foreign power, that of the Pope, which at least in Spirituals they prefer before the power of our own Governours, whether in Church or State. So that in obedience to the Bishop of *Rome*, who hath no more to do in *England* than the Bishop of *Jerusalem*, they make no scruple of disobeying the King and Bishops, and all the Laws of the Land; at least I say in all matters that relate to Religion. And whilst the Pope himself is Judge in the case what may he not hook in under that pretence? And therefore may the Papists amongst us justly be reckoned as Schismatics, whilst they refuse communion with that Christian Church where they live, which is a sound part of Christs Catholick Church, and requires nothing unlawful of its members. And very dangerous they are because they prefer a foreign Usurper before all the power of our own Church. Especially if you also consider the current Doctrine of their Church, that this same Usurper the Bishop of *Rome* has power to depose Heretical Kings (as they account ours) and to absolve their subjects from their Allegiance, and dispose of their Kingdoms to others. And this most intollerable tyranny

ranny over Princes have sundry Popes exercis'd when they have had power in their hands, and have more than once attempted it in these Kingdoms. Yea, to this day many of the rigid and stricter sort of Papists refuse to take the Oath of Allegiance, wherein this extravagant power of the Pope is denied. Judg then whether I had not reason to say that men retaining these principles and on that account rejecting our communion, are themselves such notorious and dangerous Schismaticks as have little reason to accule others of schisms and divisions.

L. But though we own not the Pope to be an Infallible Judg of Controversies, have not we sufficient means for union in our Church?

T. Yes, we have so, whilst we acknowledg the Holy Scriptures to be the Infallible Rule of Faith, in which all things necessary to salvation are plainly revealed; and do also grant that the Governours of our Church have power to compose all differences in Religion amongst our selves by proposing Articles of peace, suppressing disputes about obscure and unnecessary matters, and by determining of things indifferent in the worship of God, according to the general rules of Scripture; which principles being heartily embrac'd, and honestly practis'd will procure as much peace and union in every Church as can be expected in this state of imperfection. And by this means thanks be to God, there is more true Christian unity to be found in our Church than amongst Papists themselves, notwithstanding their Infallible Judg, Pope or Council, or they know not well who. And what appearance of union there is amongst them is to be ascribed rather to the peoples ignorance than to the Popes knowledg, yea to the Inquisition much rather than to his Infallibility.

L. I am well satisfied in this matter. But before I proceed to the next mark, pray tell me what is that unity which is required in a particular Church to make it lawful for a man to hold communion with it.

T. Plainly it is this that it be in union with the Catholick Church by holding the same faith which it has always held, and using the same worship in all things substantial which it has always used. And thus doth the Church of *England*, whilst it owns the Holy Scripture as the Rule of Faith, and receives the ancient Creeds wherein this Faith is briefly comprized; which Scripture and Creeds have been generally received by the Catholick Church in former ages as well as this. And in our Church is established the solemn Worship of the true God in the name of Jesus Christ, and here the holy Sacraments are administred according to this rule of Holy Scripture, and after the pattern of the Catholick Church in all ages, from which the Church of *Rome* is most grossly degenerated, as you may anon be more fully informed.

L. But does not the Church of *Rome* receive the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Creeds that we have? and worship the true God in the name of Jesus Christ?

T. Yes, they do so; and thereby they do plainly approve of and confirm what we hold. But then they have made additions of their own to this Faith, and have brought many corruptions into this worship, and thereby have occasion'd one of the greatest schisms that ever happened in the Church; and are themselves the Schismatics, because they make unlawful terms of communion, and exclude those who comply not with these terms. So far as they are *One* with the Catholick Church we are *One* with them. So far as they retain that Faith and Worship which has ever been approved of in the Church since the days
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of Christ and his Apostles, we are ready to joyn in communion with them ; but the errors and corruptions which in latter times have been added and imposed, these we utterly reject. In these we must dissent from them, that it may appear we are *one* with the ancient Catholick Church, which never own'd many of those things which they now impose, and we renounce, as I shall after shew. But let us proceed if you please to the other marks.

CHAP. II.

*Of the second mark of the true Church,
viz. Holiness.*

L. **T**HE next mark of the true Church is that it's Holy, which they say agrees to their Church not to ours : Their Doctrine they pretend is holy not ours ; in their Church are multitudes of holy persons to be found, whole Orders of them ; but out of it they say there is no true holiness, no holy people, nay nor can be.

T. It is a matter to be sadly lamented by all good men, that among Christians of what profession or Church soever, there is no more true piety and holiness to be found ; and that generally they are more zealous for promoting their own party and private opinions than holiness and righteousness, without which we cannot be saved, let the Church we are of be never so true, and our opinions never so sound and orthodox. But in this respect I do verily think there is no Church in the world more guilty than the Church of Rome, nor any that less deserves to be stiled an

an Holy Church. For proof of this I intend not to insist on that general looseness and impiety which abounds in Popish Countries, and no where perhaps more than in *Italy* and *Rome* it self, the Seat of his Holiness (as they stile the Pope) and yet a very sink of all sensuality and profaneness. But that which I would have you chiefly to consider is this, that several of those Doctrines of their Church, which are properly stiled Popish, and in which they differ from us, do manifestly tend to the prejudice and hindrance of an holy life, and do rather serve for an encouragement to sin and wickedness. As for instance, whilst they abuse the people with idle stories of Purgatory, where they may make satisfaction for their sins, and where they shall sometimes find much ease, and at last be delivered out by the prayers that are said for them by Priests after their death; to whom good store of money must be left for that end. How does this tend to harden men in their sins, and to prevent their timely reformation, whilst the hope of a Purgatory takes off the fear of Hell? Thus also they teach that Attrition, that is, being sorry for their sins for fear of punishment, will procure their pardon, if they make confession, and are absolved by a Priest. And at most easie rates do they grant Absolutions and Indulgences, which must needs make men much more careless of their lives, more bold to venture upon wickedness, for which they have a pardon so ready at hand.

But besides these and other hurtful opinions, we may plainly discern that in the several branches of Religion, their gross corruptions have done much to destroy all true piety and goodness. For instance, instead of a serious, spiritual, affectionate worship of God, which might help to conform the souls of men to the holiness of that God whom they worship, they have

have invented a world of useless ridiculous Ceremonies, which turn it into a kind of bodily exercise that little profits the soul. They have publick prayers in an unknown Tongue, where its enough for the people to be present, though they scarce understand a word, and what benefit can this afford to their minds? Here also contrary to Gods express command, they have brought in the worship of Images, the Invocation of Saints and Angels, especially of the Blessed Virgin; as also the adoration of the Host, that is of the consecrated Bread in their Mass, all which are horrid impieties. And even a great part of their private Devotions consists in saying over their *Pater Nosters*, and *Ave Marias* so many times by rote, of which they keep count by a sett of Beads. And is this a due worship of God in spirit and truth, with affection and reverence, such as our Blessed Saviour enjoyns, and as the very nature of God requires from all reasonable creatures? Moreover as there is little of true devotion in their worship, so they have done much by other false Doctrines of theirs to destroy righteousness, truth, peace, and charity from amongst men: to pass by their Doctrines of Equivocation, and mental reservation; many of great note in their Church have taught that no faith is to be kept with Hereticks, and its well known they have sometimes put it in practice. They exempt their Clergy from obedience to the Civil Magistrate, and teach that it is in the power of the Pope to Excommunicate and Depose Heretical Princes, and to absolve their subjects from Allegiance to them, who after this (by their principles) may lawfully rise up and rebel against them. Yea in some of their Councils they have decreed that the Rulers who will not root out Hereticks (as they account all that are not of their Church) shall

shall be deprived of their Dominions. And when they have had power in their hands they have exercised the most barbarous cruelty upon those they call Hereticks that ever was heard of in the world, both in our own and other Nations, especially where their bloody Inquisition is allow'd. They burn their bodies, and censure their souls to Hell, and this is Popish charity. This is the Church that boasts so much of her holiness and good works.

But should I go about to tell you what is the Divinity of many of their famous Casuists, especially of the Jesuits, as it's laid open by some of their own Church, and is to be seen in their Books, and in the present Popes condemnation of some of their grossest Doctrines: if this, I say, should be laid open, you would be amazed to find how there is scarce any sin but with one distinction and evasion or other you might be allow'd to commit it, scarce any duty but you might have a colour for the neglect of it. Amazed one may well be, to find men calling themselves Christians, yea Doctors of the Church, to allow and defend such practices as a sober heathen would abhor. Yet this is the Church that is to be known by her Holiness above all other Churches.

L. *Many of these things which you object against their Church I find my Author afterwards to vindicate; but in the mean time he says we Protestants have no holiness in our Church, that the first Reformers were very wicked men, and so are their followers, and a great many ill things he says of those he calls Sectaries, as guilty of Rebellion, Murders, Adultery, Sacriledg, &c.*

T. As to those who have been really guilty of these or the like crimes, let them bear all the blame which they most justly deserve. As to our own Church its no way concerned in this charge: no, but let the

shame light upon that Church which first taught and practised Treason and Rebellion, Plots and Conspiracies, murdering of Kings, and massacring of their Subjects under pretence of Religion. And if any that are called Protestants have been guilty of such Villanies, they may in respect of these practices and the principles whence they flow, justly be stiled the Jesuits Disciples, whatever abhorrence they may pretend for other points of Popery.

L. But he says we take away all fear of God, and obedience to his commands, and all good Doctrine, with more to that purpose.

T. A plain sign it is that they themselves have no fear of God before their eyes, whilst they are guilty of such malicious slanders and reproaches. Some good pretence they might have for these censures, if we took away the Scriptures from the people, wherein all good Doctrine and Gods holy commandments are contain'd, and instead of these should put into their hands lying Legends, devised by idle Monks, full of feigned miracles and ridiculous stories, which tend to nourish superstition and error. But on the contrary, its well known, that we not only allow to common people the use of holy Scripture, but do most earnestly exhort them to be diligent and constant in the reading and meditation of it. How then dare they say that we take away all good Doctrine? And is not this the chief design of the Sermons so plentifully preached amongst us, to explain these holy Scriptures, to shew the people thence their duty both to God and man, and to enforce the same upon them? To this same end are also written many excellent Books by the Divines of our Church. Yea some done by the more devout Writers of their Church, which do chiefly aim at the promoting of good life, have been

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translated into our language, are commonly read and well esteemed among us, such as *Thomas à Kempis*, *Drexelius*, *Sales*, and others. Nothing is more frequently prest upon us than that above all things we ought to live in imitation of our Blessed Saviour and his holy Apostles, in the exercise of true devotion and piety to God, of righteousness, truth and mercy, to one another, and of purity and sobriety in our own persons, which we look upon as the very summ of Religion, and the great design of the Gospel according to *Tit.* 2. 11, 12. With us is taught the great obligation that lies upon all men whether Clergy or Laity to be obedient to the King as supreme, and to all that are in authority under him. That we ought to love our neighbours as our selves, keeping faith and truth with all men, whether good or bad, Orthodox or Heretical, avoiding all equivocation and mental reservation. With us is taught the excellency and necessity of charity, both in doing good to all that need our assistance, and in forgiving those who have done evil to us, if ever we hope for mercy and forgiveness from God. And as many publick good works have been done in this Kingdom since the Reformation as can be shewn, within the same compass of years, in times of Popery, though upon better principles. In our Church we are taught to flie from whoredom, drunkenness, and all riotous sensual courses; and that not as slight and venial faults, but as most dangerous and deadly vices. And for the more effectual promoting of holiness, our Religious worship is framed according to the rules of holy Scripture, directed to God only in the name of his Son Jesus, not to Angels or Saints. Our prayers are in a known tongue, that the people may be affected and edified, and as the Apostle requires may be able on good grounds to

say Amen. We have the Holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords-Supper administred according to our Saviours own Institution, and these still urged as most solemn obligations to all piety and holiness of living, without which the outward performance will stand us in no stead. We declare that no pardon for sin can be obtain'd but on condition of sincere repentance, and that no repentance is sincere but what produces reformation and amendment of life, if opportunity be afforded. So that our Doctrine you see is the Doctrine of the Gospel, and the precepts of it are daily inculcated on the people. Our Prayers and Sacraments are framed and ordered according to the rules of it; and all most evidently tend to the producing of that holiness which the Gospel most strictly requires, being a *Doctrine according to godliness*, as the Apostle styles it. And through Gods blessing on his own Ordinances, and the endeavours of his faithful Ministers, there are great numbers amongst us who do live truly religious Christian, holy lives; as many I am apt to think, as are to be found in any Christian Church throughout the world of the same largeness with ours. As to the wickedness of others, which we justly lament, (as good men in all ages have sadly lamented the same) this is the fault of particular persons, and not to be charged upon the Church, which owns no Doctrines that promote wickedness, much less does she require of her members the embracing and professing of any such false and mischievous Doctrines, nor does she impose upon them any thing which God has forbidden, nor restrain them from any duty which he has commanded. This therefore may sufficiently shew the Holiness of our Church to be such as that we may lawfully hold communion with it; yea and are bound so to do, since there is nothing
sinful

sinful required of us in order thereto; but here we may be as pious and holy as in any Church whatever, and I think have as great helps and encouragements thereto.

L. My Author grants that there are some in our Church who appear modest and charitable, and so there are among the Heathens; but he says its all but outward appearance, since we have no true Religion, as he pretends, and therefore can have no true virtue.

T. How utterly groundless and unjust is this charge whilst (as hath been said before) we do most firmly believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, and from this our belief in him and his holy Gospel do our works proceed, and out of true love to God and to our brother. Judg then whether they who have that faith in Christ which works by love, are to be reckoned amongst Heathens and Infidels? Or rather are not they destitute both of Christian charity and common modesty and ingenuity who talk at this absurd and most malicious rate?

L. Indeed I see not how they can excuse themselves herein: but yet I hear them boasting often what numbers of Saints and Martyrs they have had in their Church, both in former and latter ages, and will allow no Saints in any other Church but theirs.

*T. As to Saints of latter ages, they keep up the names and tell fine stories of some, of whom its much doubted whether they ever had a being in the world. But which is far worse, there are some whom they cry up for Saints and Martyrs who died as Rebels and Traytors against their Prince, in a blind, furious zeal for their great Master the Pope. Such was their *Thomas à Becket* formerly, and *Garnet* lately, with others of the like stamp. But as to the true Saints of former ages, though some of them might live in the same*

places in which they of the *Romish* Church now do, yet are they not to be accounted members of that Church, according to its present constitution, since they were utter strangers to those falshoods and superstitions which are now establish'd amongst them: only they embraced that same pure, plain, Christian Religion, which is at this day profess'd with us, and are therefore rather to be reckoned of our Church than theirs.

L. This is plain enough: but what say you to the great numbers of Religious people still amongst them, viz. those of their several Orders in their Monasteries and Nunneries, that live single lives, being retired from the world, that they may wholly give up themselves to Gods service? for they talk much of these when they boast of the holiness of their Church?

T. For my part I hope there are some amongst them who deserve the name of Religious, and where there is one truly so I wish there were an hundred. Yea, I would to God that both with them and all other Churches every man who is called a Christian may walk worthy of his holy profession. I have no desire to make any party of men worse than indeed they are, nor any delight in representing how bad they be, or are commonly censured at least. And therefore I shall say nothing of all that filthiness and lewdness, which in former times their Monks and Nuns have been severely accused of, by some of their own Church: for I care not for raking in such a channel. Nor shall I take notice how much they are degenerated from the first institution of a Monastick life, in which men were wont to be very diligent and industrious in some honest and useful employment. But yet that you may not be abused by fair shows, and specious pretences, I would not have you think that
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men and women are ever the more holy and religious for leaving their families and callings, and shutting up themselves in Cloisters, there to repeat over so many *Creeds* and *Pater-Nosters* in a day. For there is no encouragement given in the Gospel for our entring into such a lazy, retired course of life. Nor is it at all like to the life of our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles; neither do they hereby bring that honour to God, nor that good to the world, which by a more free and active life they might do. So that I doubt not but that in thousands of pious, well ordered families, there is more true devotion, yea more purity and chastity than in most of these their Religious Houses, as they call them.

But beside all this, there is one thing I would have you seriously to consider, that though I grant there may be, and I hope are some Papists truly religious (whether in their Cloisters or out of them) yet it is not as they are Papists, but as they are Christians of the same faith with us who are reformed from their errors. So that whatever holiness is amongst them, it makes nothing for the honour of Popery, (that is of those Doctrines wherein they differ from us) but of Christianity in its purity and simplicity as it is profest amongst us. To speak yet plainer if need be, any of them that are truly good, become so (through the grace of God) by their firm and effectual belief of the Christian Religion, viz. that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification, that he will come to judg the quick and the dead, and will sentence the wicked to everlasting punishment, and receive the righteous to life eternal. Such as these are the great truths of our Religion, which being heartily believed, and seriously considered, do by Gods blessing thoroughly change

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mens hearts and lives, and make them truly pious and good. But no body becomes so by his believing that the Bishop of *Rome* is Christs Vicar, and has power over all the Princes on earth; that their Church is infallible, and the Mistress of all other Churches; that there is a Purgatory, with the rest of those Doctrines which they embrace and we reject. Nay these opinions with their consequences rather tend to make men much worse than otherwise they would have been. Some of them make them more loose and careless in the leading of their lives, and some make them most cruel and uncharitable to such as differ from them; yea, render them many times disobedient to their rulers, and furious disturbers of the peace by Plots and Treasons and Rebellions for the advancing of their cause. True Christianity puts men upon no such courses, but these are the natural effects of Popery, as has often been verified by sad experience.

L. I understand you well, and am fully perswaded that we in our Church do embrace all those Christian Doctrines that tend to the promoting of good life, and do retain none that are an hindrance to it. But what say you to their objections against Calvin and Luther, who, as my Author says, were very wicked men; and strange stories he tells of them out of Bolsec and other Writers of their Church.

T. To this I answer, that it sufficiently appears how bad their cause is which must be maintain'd by the most odious lies and forgeries. For there are no Books in the world less to be credited than those which their Monks and Priests have written in praise of those they have Canonized for Saints, and in dispraise of such as they have damned for Hereticks; making the former somewhat more than Angels, and the latter worse than Devils. But as to Calvin and
Luther,

Luther, some of the more ingenuous even of their own Church have given a fairer character of them than their lying *Bolsec* and such Authors. And had they but been as zealous for Popery as they were against it, no doubt but they had past amongst them for great Saints with all their faults. But in the mean time, were they really as bad as they falsely accuse them to be, yet are we little or nothing concerned herein, since they were not the Reformers of our Church. Nor yet if they had, is it the goodness of this or that person which we are obliged to defend, but the truth of our Doctrine, and the lawfulness and necessity of our Reformation. Thus they make a great out-cry against *Henry* the Eighth, what a bad man he was, and what ill designs he had in throwing off the Popes Supremacy, which was the most he did toward the Reformation: but let his designs be what they would, the thing it self was justifiable and good. VVhat if a bad Emperor, upon carnal designs should have supprest Heathenism, and promoted Christianity (as *Constantine* himself was accused by some) is this any dishonour to the Christian Religion? But little cause have Papists of all men to talk of ill instruments, whilst they may remember from what a Trayterous Murderer and Usurper, the Pope first received the title of Universal Bishop, for which he had been long quarrelling with the Bishop of *Constantinople*. And however they slander *Calvin* and *Luther*, we might with much more reason and truth object what kind of creatures multitudes of their Popes have been, whom they own as Heads of their Church, even such monsters of men for all manner of impiety, filthiness and cruelty, as the world hath scarce ever heard of the like. And this we have from those of their own Church who have written their Lives;
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and their greatest Champions, such as *Bellarmino* and *Baronius*, cannot deny it.

L. But its further objected against Calvin and Luther, and the first Reformers, that they never wrought miracles, to shew they had a commission from God.

T. Our first Reformers never pretended to bring in any new Religion, only they cast out Popish Innovations, which had corrupted and defaced it : and for this they needed no extraordinary commission from heaven, nor any miracles to warrant the same. For they preached no other but the same old Religion which was taught by Christ and his Apostles, and was abundantly confirmed by the miracles which they wrought long ago. And with us the Reformation was begun and carried on in a just and regular manner, by our Rulers in Church and State, who had full authority to make the same ; even as the Kings and High-Priests of old had to reform any abuses and corruptions which at any time were crept into the *Jewish* Church. And as these needed no new commission from Heaven, no new miracles to authorize them to rectifie disorders, and reform the Church according to the rules of *Moses's* Law, no more did our Reformers need them, for the removing of those errors and superstitions which had by degrees been brought in contrary to our Saviours Gospel.

L. I see no reason indeed why miracles should be expected from them who only cast out new inventions, and keep fast to the old Christian Religion, which hath already been confirmed by so many and great miracles. But yet my Author says that in their Church they have had miracles wrought in all ages, such as curing the blind and deaf, raising the dead, and casting out of Devils, which he accounts to make mightily for the honour of their Saints, and of the Church to which they belong.

T. In

T. In the Primitive times indeed such miracles were wrought for proving of the Christian Doctrine, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and all that he taught, most certainly true: and this Doctrine so confirmed is the Religion which we at this day do openly profess in our Church. But then I utterly deny that ever such miracles were wrought to prove the truth of Popish Doctrines (properly so called) as of Transubstantiation, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints, &c. for these were never taught by Christ or his Apostles, and therefore could not receive confirmation from the miracles of their working. As to any that are pretended to be done in the Church of *Rome* for the attesting of these, they are meer cheats and forgeries, or lying wonders agreeable to the nature of those false Doctrines which they are designed to confirm. And though your Author talks of healing the sick, raising the dead, &c. I can hear of no such thing done by any of them amongst us, whatever they may pretend to in Popish Countries, where its an easie matter for cunning Priests to impose upon credulous people. But were indeed any such miracles wrought for the proof of Popish Doctrines, one would think they should be done amongst those they call Hereticks, who stand in need of such arguments for their conviction, rather than amongst their own people who need them not.

Great Stories they often tell of their casting out of Devils; and for this knack are their Priests mightily magnified by their deluded followers, and prefer'd before the Ministers of our Church, who pretend to no such matter. But that this is a gross cheat seems plain enough from hence, that what their Priests pretend to in this kind, for all that ever I could hear, is still done in some dark corner, amongst those
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of their own party, not daring to come into the open light, and submit their proceedings herein to the careful examination of skilful and impartial persons. Sometimes perhaps they perswade melancholy people that they were posselt, and they have cured them, when they either leave them little better than they found them, or else may work a cure by Physick proper for that purpose. Sometimes its notorious they have train'd up Cheats for this very purpose. A famous instance there was of this some years ago amongst our selves, viz. the Boy of *Bilston* near *Wolverhampton* in *Staffordshire*, said to be disposselt by some Catholick Gentlemen (as they stiled themselves) but to the grief and shame of the Authors, the whole Imposture was discovered and publish'd to the world by Dr. *Morton*, then Bishop of *Lichfield* and *Coventry*.

L. If they indeed had this miraculous power of casting out Devils, which they make such boasts of, I wonder they do not shew the same power in working other miracles as well as this?

T. 'Tis very true. But this they may chuse to deal in, because the Imposture is not so easily found out. For here they commonly have to do with poor melancholy people, and with young women especially, who are sometimes afflicted with strange distempers, which both themselves and their friends may ignorantly fancy to be a possession of the Devil, and so are lyable to be imposed upon either by a subtile, or by a silly Priest, who may perhaps be deceived as well as his Patients, and if they happen to recover may think he has done great feats by the mighty pains he has taken. And truly the method which they use in these their Exorcisms or casting out of Devils, as its described in their own Books, is nothing like that of
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our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, who by the speaking of a few words did presently cast them forth with authority, whereas Popish Priests make a long work, and keep a great deal of stir about it, using such ceremonies and charms, such strange ways of proceeding as makes it look like some unlawful conjuring: or at best, the whole appears very odd and ridiculous, they having neither any command or example in the holy Scripture for the warrant of such practices on this occasion. And one remarkable difference there is which is worth our notice, that in the Primitive times those out of whom the Devils were cast, generally were Heathens or Infidels, who hereupon commonly became Converts to Christianity; whereas now adays those who are said to be dispossessed by their Priests, are people of their own party, who may easily be practised upon, or induced to believe whatever their Ghostly Father tells them. But I wonder when we hear of a Protestant being possessed with Devils, and dispossessed by a Popish Priest, except when there has been much juggling with a new Convert.

L. I confess I never heard of any. If you please we will now proceed to the next mark of a true Church.

T. Yes, presently we will: but before I leave this subject of the Holiness of the Church, I would desire you to take notice that every good Christian, who is no Papist, hath in and from himself, as full evidence of the falshood of Popery, as he has of his own sincerity and true piety; for they declare that no man has any true faith or holiness that is not of their Church, and on this account the current Doctrine amongst them is, That no man out of it can be saved. But now if you upon a faithful examination of your own heart and life, do find that you do by Gods grace most stedfastly believe the Gospel of our Lord Jesus,
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and do live in sincere obedience to the precepts of it according to the best of your understanding, you have then at hand a most plain and undeniable demonstration even from this knowledg of your self, that their Doctrine is most false, whilst they confine both holiness and salvation to their own party, since you who are not of it do believe and obey the Gospel, and our blessed Saviour hath promised pardon and salvation to all that do so, without requiring them moreover to believe the Pope to be his Vicar, and to submit to all his Doctrines and Decrees. Hence then I say its very evident to every honest Christian, though no Papist, that he may be holy, and so may be saved without being of the *Romish* Church, and consequently this is not that Catholick Church out of which no salvation is to be had.

L. This is indeed a plain argument, which every good man may fetch from the knowledg of his own faith and godliness; whilst I know and feel that I believe in my Saviour, and truly love and serve him, certainly I may upon good grounds hope for that happiness which he hath promised to all that are so qualified. And whilst I thus know my own sincerity I shall not much be concern'd though a thousand Popish Priests should tell me that I have neither faith nor holiness, nor can possibly be saved, because I am not their follower: for sure the testimony of a mans own conscience is of much more value than all their censures, and Christs promises are worthy of more regard, I hope, than the Popes threatenings.

T. I think they are. It may also be worth our notice to consider what a great dishonour is cast upon their proselytes by this Doctrine of theirs: for if there be no true faith or holiness out of the *Romish* Church, then these their Converts must confess that they

they had neither before they turned Papists, but were meer Infidels, and profane ungodly persons.

L. This seems evidently to follow upon their principles: and I fear it's often too true. For though I will not take upon me to censure those whom I know not, yet I must confess so far as I have observed, in the place where I live, most of those who have been perverted by them were persons of very ill lives before.

T. Yea, and more than this, so they commonly remain after. For as we shall rarely find any persons of much sobriety and seriousness revolt to them from our Church; so never did I for my own part know one that became a better man and stricter liver by his turning Papist. For whatever they talk of holiness, their chief business like the Pharisees of old, is to make proselytes to their own party; and then whether after that they grow better or worse, as to their Morals, is a matter they seem not much concern'd about. Get them but once into the bosom of the Church, and their business is done. As for a poor Protestant, let him be never so humble and holy, never so obedient to his Rulers, and charitable to his brethren, never so desirous to know the whole will of God and to do it, yet there is no help for him, no way but to Hell he must go, because forsooth he is an Heretick out of the *Romish* Church. But for the Papist, the happy man that has had the good luck to hit into this true Church, they have so many tricks and quirks to secure him, in his life, at his death, and after it, that let his faults be what they will, its very strange if he miss of Heaven, at least after he has taken Purgatory in his way, if he was very poor; for rich men may easily escape that too, or get soon out of it if they'll follow the Priests directions. Such fine devices they have to give men a lift to Heaven, without putting
them

them to the trouble of walking in that narrow way of serious holiness which alone leads thither. So that I cannot but say (and without any prejudice or partiality I speak it) notwithstanding all that noise and talk of holiness in the Church of *Rome*, nothing but Holy Mother Church, Holy Father the Pope, Holy Altars, Holy Images, Holy Water, Holy Crosses, Beads, *Agnus Dei's*, Reliques, and a thousand holy trinkets more, yet I think there is as little true holiness of life and conversation to be found amongst them as in any Church of the world. Yea, we shall often find, that when those of that way are told of the holy Lives of many Protestants, or are themselves exhorted to strictness and piety of life, as that wherein true Religion chiefly consists, they will be ready presently to make a puff at it, as if this was of no value in comparison of being of the true Church, of the infallible Catholick Church, (as they fondly call their own Sect) as if being in a good Church would secure a bad man, when we are so plainly taught, that *without holiness no man shall see God*, let him be of what Church he will.

Wherefore, to conclude this, remember that since in the Church of *England* the holy Gospel is most purely taught, and the holy Sacraments duly administered, according to our Saviours own institution; and the members of it are neither required to profess any falshood, or practise any evil in order to their communion with it; but on the contrary are most strictly enjoined to be holy in all their conversation, and do here enjoy all manner of helps and advantages thereto; therefore I say this is such an Holy Church as that you may and ought to hold communion with it. Proceed we now to the following Marks of the true Church.

CHAP. III.

*Of the third mark of the true Church, that
it's Catholick.*

L. **T**HE next mark he lays down of the true Church is, that its Catholick. And here they make great boasting and triumphing, for they say none else call themselves Catholicks but they, nor as they pretend, have any reason so to do, since they tell of vast numbers belonging to their Church in all places of the world far and near, and how they convert Heathens, whilst Protestants, they say, are but a little handful here and there in corners amongst a multitude of Catholicks.

T. As to what they call themselves it matters little, for be sure they'l give themselves good words. Neither is it true that none but they lay claim to that name; for we of this Church do esteem our selves true Catholick Christians; as professing the ancient Catholick faith of Christ; and so do frequently stile both our selves and our Doctrine, and with good reason, as I doubt not to demonstrate. As to their great numbers compared to other Christians, suppose what they alledge were true (as it is most false) yet is this no sufficient argument of their being true Catholicks: for that's to be judged by the truth of their Doctrines, and not by the number of Professors. For if we should at this rate go to the Poll, and judg of truth by most votes, then might the *Mahometans* carry it from Christians. And heretofore the number of the *Arrians* was said to be greater than of the Orthodox.

thodox. But that's to be accounted a true part of the Catholick Church which professes the Catholick faith, even the same Christian Religion which all good Christians in all ages (former as well as latter) and of all Nations, have ever constantly profest. And by this rule you will find that the Church of *England* is a most true and sound part of the Catholick Church, as professing this same Christian faith contain'd in the Gospel, and summ'd up in the Apostles Creed. Here you may remember what I have before told you, that it is most vain and unreasonable for any one particular Church to stile her self the whole Catholick Church, as if there were no Christians in the world but themselves. And yet in this sense doth the Church of *Rome* stile her self Catholick; the absurdity of which I have before shewed. And there needs nothing more to manifest it than this single consideration, that there are thousands and millions of Christians, in several parts of the world, who neither now do, nor ever did own the Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, which is the great fundamental article of their faith; (to pass by all others at present) and yet all these whilst they embrace the whole Christian Doctrine, taught in the holy Scriptures, are to be lookt on as true Catholick Christians, though they do not believe the Bishop of *Rome* to be Christs Vicar upon earth, invested with Supremacy over all Christian Churches; for this is a Doctrine which our Saviour never taught his Disciples. Now without owning this false Doctrine a man cannot be of the Church of *Rome*, according to the Decrees of their Popes and Councils; and yet without this, I say, a man may receive the whole Christian Religion, as it was delivered by Christ and his Apostles, and therefore he may be a true Catholick Christian though he be not of the *Romish* Church, nor yields subjection to it.

L. This

L. *This seems to me very plain and clear.*

7. But it will appear yet more plain if you consider, what is a most certain truth, that there can be no manner of good evidence given, that the Church of Christ for some hundred years after our blessed Saviours time, did ever receive this Doctrine of the Popes Supremacy, or his Infallibility. Nay our learned men assert that there is not so much as any one Christian Writer for at least three hundred years after that time, (some say four or five) that did ever so much as teach any such strange Doctrine as this. How then I beseech you, can the owning of it now be necessary to make a man a Catholick, when the whole Catholick Church for some ages after its first Plantation was a meer stranger to it?

L. *I think there is no appearance of reason for it.*

T. To this add that the whole *Greek* (which was much larger than the *Romish* before it was over-run by the *Turks*) ever disown'd these same new opinions of the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility, with many others of the same stamp; neither do they generally embrace them to this day, (though sometimes the *Romanists* have used all manner of arts and devices to draw them into a submission) and therefore especially do they account the *Greeks* to be Hereticks and Schismatics, though I know they lay some other things to their charge. But besides the *Greek Church*, there are multitudes of other Christians in several parts of the world who submit not to the Bishop of *Rome*. So that this boast of their vast numbers in comparison of others, is as false as it is weak. For according to the computation of many learned men, if all the Christians in the world were divided into four parts, those who belong to the *Romish Church*, where ever they are scattered, would not make one quarter of

them. With what face then can they pretend that they alone are the whole Catholick Church? As if there were no Christians in the world but themselves, all the rest being Hereticks or Infidels, or what they please to call them.

L. *But they say these Churches are not Protestants.*

T. Whether that name be proper to them or not, it's enough that they joyn with us in the most substantial points against the Papists. As to the name of Protestants, I before told you we do commonly understand by it those who have reformed themselves from the errors of the *Romish* Church, and have cast off her authority, which before she unjustly usurped over them. And in this sense there are a great many large and flourishing Churches of them in these Western parts of the world, besides numerous Plantations in the East and *West-Indies*, especially in the latter, where many of the Native Heathens have been converted by them. But as to the *Greeks* and those other Churches who never were enslaved to the Bishop of *Rome*, though the name of Protestant may not so fitly belong to them, yet do they agree with us in utterly disowning the Supremacy of that Bishop, which is the very fundamental Doctrine of the *Romish* Church, by which especially they are distinguished from those of all other communions. As to other points wherein the *Romanists* and the Reformed differ, in some of them the *Greeks* agree with us, in others with them. But that which is most material to my purpose is this, that all these Churches do hold the same essential Articles of Christian Doctrine with us. They receive the same holy Scriptures, and the same ancient Creeds in which our faith is contain'd; but then they reject many of those additions which in latter times have been made by pretended General Councils of the
Roman

Roman Church. Particularly, I say, they deny the Supremacy and Infallibility of that Church, the chief of their new Doctrines. By this therefore judg whose faith is most Catholick or Universal, whilst many of their fundamental Articles (as they esteem them) are rejected by all Christian Churches besides themselves, who are not a fourth part of Christendom, whereas all the Articles of our Faith are embraced by all these Churches, yea even by the Church of *Rome* it self; for as I have often said, the sum of our Faith and Religion is in the Apostles Creed, and this hath been received by the whole Catholick Church in all times and places, and the *Roman Church* also retains it, though she has added new Articles to it. But if she has any good pretence to the title of being part of the Catholick Church, it must be upon account of her receiving and professing this same Christian Faith which we together with the whole Church of Christ do hold, and not on account of those new Articles she has added; which are so generally disown'd both by us and all other Christians in the world except their own party, and which were utterly unknown to the Catholick Church for many ages after our Saviour. Judge then I say whose faith is most Catholick, theirs or ours?

L. I confess there seems little difficulty in the case, but yet I have heard them oft object that ours is for the most part a Negative Religion, made up of Negative Articles, as that the Pope is not Head of the Church, that there is no Purgatory, no Transubstantiation, &c. Now they say we find no such Negative Doctrines in the Catholick Church of old, and therefore we do herein differ from it.

T. To this the answer is exceeding easie, that we hereby only reject those corrupt additions which the

Romish Church hath made to the ancient Catholick Faith. And their obtruding these fallhoods on the world gave occasion for such Negative Articles as those you mention, which we now look upon as very necessary, to shew that we keep close to the ancient Rule of Faith delivered by Christ and his Apostles, which Faith we keep entire, and do express it most positively and plainly, as we have it in the Creed. But the Novelties which the *Romish* Church hath added to this, we do utterly deny and reject. As for instance, when the Bishops of that Church, many hundred years after our Saviour, make a new claim of an Universal Jurisdiction over all Christian Churches, we think it most just and necessary to disown all such his Supremacy, as being no where taught in the Gospel, nor mention'd in the Creed, nor own'd by the Primitive Church. The same we declare concerning their other Doctrines of Purgatory and Transubstantiation, that we believe them nor. So we also teach that there ought to be no worship of Images, no Invocation of Saints or Angels, &c. and all this for the same reason, because no where enjoyn'd by our Saviour or his Apostles, nor establish'd in any of the four first General Councils (which we readily embrace) but rather the contrary to these is either expressly taught, or plainly enough insinuated. And if the Church of *Rome* shall still go on to coin new Articles, we shall as occasion is offered, still be as ready to reject them, declaring them to be no part of our Faith. And by this means we do best manifest our conformity to the Catholick Church in all ages, contenting our selves with that Faith which she hath ever profess'd. and transmitted to posterity. And here it is a most ridiculous thing for them to bid us shew where the Church of old held such Negative Articles as we now do, since these were

not like to be heard of before the errors that occasion'd them were introduced. As when the Judaizing Christians taught the necessity of keeping *Moses Law*, then the Apostles denied it, and establish'd the contrary. Now suppose this error had not been broach'd till some hundred years after, had it not been sufficient for the Christians then to say that the Apostles never taught it, who revealed the whole Counsel of God, and therefore certainly it could be no part of their faith. And so say we of the Doctrines before mention'd, the Popes Supremacy, the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and the like, if these had been so necessary as Papists hold, we should hear of them in our Saviours Sermons, or in some of the Epistles written by the Apostles to several Churches, or sure we should meet with them in the writings of the most ancient Fathers, or in the Decrees of the first Councils: but since we find no such thing, we may firmly conclude them to be no essential Articles of the Christian Faith. As if now that party in the *Roman Church* which asserts the freedom of the Blessed Virgin from Original sin, should so far prevail, as to get a Council, like that packt up at *Trent*, to establish this new opinion as an Article of Faith, would it not be enough for us to reply, that this is no where to be found in Scripture, or in the Creed, and therefore whether true or false, yet certainly is no article of faith? And thus we shew our selves to be of the same faith with the Catholick Church of old, whilst we embrace the very same Articles which she did, and what more is obtruded upon us as part of the faith, we do constantly reject it, either as false or as unnecessary. Though as to all or most of the points which we thus reject, you will find sufficient evidence against them in holy Scripture, as I shall afterward shew.

L. But they commonly say that they have only established these new Doctrines in opposition to new Heresies, with which the Church in former times was not troubled, and therefore did not so fully and expressly determine against them, as they now have done: yet they pretend that these their new Articles were plainly implied and contain'd under some head or other, of ancient Doctrine.

T. All this is most false and frivolous, since if these new coin'd Articles of theirs had been true, there was the same reason why they should have been taught anciently as well as now, and occasion enough was frequently offered. To instance in one for all. If Saint Peter was indeed to have been made supreme Governour of the Christian Church, and the Bishops of Rome after him, would not our Saviour have told his Apostles so, when they were contending who should be greatest? And after this in the Primitive times, when there were often hot contentions amongst Bishops and Churches, would they not all have appeal'd to the Pope for the decision of their controversies, and have yielded submission to his sentence, if this had been the current Doctrine of the Church, that he was their Supreme Governour and Infallible Judge? But alas! we find no such matter. And consider further that when Heresies arose, the ancient Fathers who wrote against them, plainly shew'd how they contradicted the Holy Scripture, and the common Doctrine contain'd in the Creed, as explain'd by those who went before them. Thus when the *Arrians* denied the Divinity of our Saviour, the Orthodox both proved it by Scripture, and urged that Article of the Creed, that Jesus is the Son of God, which they shew'd was still interpreted of his partaking of a Divine nature, as was afterward therefore more fully express'd in the *Nicene Creed*. But now where can Pa-

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pists shew Scripture in proof of their Novelties? Or in what Article of the Creed will they prove them to be virtually contain'd, and shew that the Article was so understood by those Ancients who have written Comments on the Creed? How will they by this method make out that the Pope is Christs Vicar on Earth? not surely because Christ is the Son of God. Or what because there is mention made of the Catholick Church, must that be meant only of the *Roman* Church, so that none must belong to it but those who yield subjection to the Pope? But what ancient Writer did ever thus explain this or the other Article? And to what Articles I beseech you must we reduce those other peculiar Doctrines of theirs, Transubstantiation, Purgatory, &c. with the rest of their gross Errors and Innovations? These therefore do we most justly reject as being corrupt additions to the ancient Christian Faith, the common Faith of Gods Holy Catholick Church, which we retain firm and entire without adding or diminishing.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the fourth Mark of the true Church,
that it is Apostolick.*

L. **B**T your last discourse I am fully satisfied how little reason Papists have to assume and engross to themselves the title of Catholicks: and that our Church of England is a true and sound part of the Catholick Church. And at the same time I do also perceive that the last mark of a true Church doth as properly belong to it, viz. that it is Apostolick.

T, This

7. This is indeed so very plain from what hath been said under the former head, that I reckon there is little need to spend much time in speaking particularly to it. For, as I have often inculcated, our Church receives all those Doctrines which we are certain were taught by the Apostles, that faith which was delivered by them to the Churches which they planted, as it is to be found at large in their writings; and which is sum'm'd up in that which we call the Apostles Creed, as being the Summary of their Doctrine. All the Articles of this Creed we do stedfastly embrace and profess; and that in the plain sense of the words, according to the commonly received interpretation of the Church of Christ, in the first and purest ages. And thus our Doctrine is Apostolical, so also is our Government, our Worship and Administration of the holy Sacraments, and therefore our Church doth most justly deserve the title of an Apostolical Church. For according to the precepts and example of the Apostles, we worship the true God in the name of his Son Jesus our only Mediator, and that in a language understood by the people. We baptize with water, *In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost*. And in the Lords-Supper do give both Bread and Wine to the people, according to our Saviours own institution. In a word we preach the very same Faith, the same holiness and righteousness of life which the Apostles did. But on the other hand it's most certain, that as to the chief points wherein the Church of *Rome* and we differ, the Apostles never delivered those Doctrines, nor enjoyn'd those practices, which are obtruded upon us by that corrupt Church. They never taught that the Bishop of *Rome* is the supreme and infallible Head of the Church. They never taught us to pray to Angels or Saints, no not to the Blessed Virgin

Virgin her self; nor to make Prayers for the Dead, that they might be delivered out of Purgatory; nor to take away the Cup from the Laity, nor to worship the consecrated Host, to adore Images, or to make any use of them in Religious service. These things with many others now used in the Church of Rome were never taught or practised by the Holy Apostles, and therefore so far that Church is not Apostolical.

L. I do verily believe it deserves not that name with respect to those Doctrines and practices wherein it differs from us. But I hear them often making great boasts, that theirs must certainly be an Apostolical Church, because an Apostle himself was once their Bishop, even St. Peter, and he ordained another Bishop to succeed him, and so hath the succession continued to this day, and therefore sure they must needs be an Apostolical Church.

T. In answer to this, I shall wave the dispute whether indeed St. Peter was ever Bishop of Rome or no; and shall pass by all that may be said of the frequent Schisms which have happen'd amongst them, by their having sometimes two or three Popes at once, and that for many years together; nor shall I tell of the fine tricks and politick intrigues of the Cardinals at the Election of a Pope; nor of those vile arts which are frequently used by such as aspire to that dignity, all which tends very much to abate their honour, and shews how unlike they are to the Apostles, whose Successors they boast themselves to be. But waving these things, let me only desire you to consider how little force there is in this argument to prove their Church to be now Apostolical, that once there was an Apostle Bishop of it, except there still continue with them the same truth of Doctrine and purity of worship which the Apostles did at first teach and establish. For let us grant that St. Peter and St. Paul
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with other holy men planted a Church at *Rome*, yet is it not possible that here as well as at *Ephesus*, might afterward arise men who should teach perverse things (as we find it exprest, *Act. 20. 30.*) and thereby corrupt the Doctrine of the Gospel? Was it not thus in many other Churches? And may it not be so at *Rome* too? yea most certainly we know it is so. For though we grant that Church to have remain'd for a considerable time pure and uncorrupted, yet for many ages by-past to this very day, there have been such Doctrines and practices currently received and established in that Church as the Apostles never taught to them nor to any others. And with respect to these I say they deserve not the title of an Apostolical Church, meerly because an Apostle at first planted it, and presided over it. The Papists themselves will not now allow this title to any of the *Greek Churches*, which were planted by the Apostles, because they look upon them as erroneous and schismatical; and certainly they themselves have as little reason to challenge it as any of their neighbours, being at least as grossly degenerated as any, though they may have more prosperity and greater numbers of people adhering to them. It is not then so much the sitting in the same Chair, as teaching the same Doctrines with the Apostles, that makes a Bishop to be a true Successor of them. Wherefore those Churches which were planted by holy men after the Apostles were dead and gone, if they receive the same Doctrine, and retain the same worship and Sacraments which the Apostles did, these may most justly be accounted Apostolical Churches, sound members of the One, Holy, Catholick, Apostolick Church of Christ.

L. *I think there is great reason so to account them : but it seems very unreasonable that any one Church should*
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stile it self the Apostolick Church, so as to exclude all others from that title; especially so unsound a Church as that of Rome, which is at this day so very unlike to what it was in the times of the Apostles.

T. It is indeed every whit as unreasonable as to arrogate to themselves alone the name of Catholick, which we discoursed of before. Nay let us suppose that the Bishops of *Rome* to this very day followed the example of the Apostles, preached the same Doctrine, led the same good lives, and used the same holy worship and discipline, so that their Church indeed deserved to be own'd as Apostolical, yet what in reason could be infer'd from hence more than this, *viz.* that the people in their own Diocess should be subject to them, and that all other sister Churches ought to give them due respect, and maintain such communion with them as those at a distance are capable of. But it does not in the least follow that the Bishop of *Rome* is Christs Vicar upon Earth, and their Church the only Catholick and Apostolick Church, so that none must have this title but those who inflave themselves to the Pope.

L. You have said enough to convince me how very absurd it is for the Church of *Rome* to stile hir self the Catholick Apostolick Church, as if there were no other Christians in the world but Papists; yet pray tell me, may not the Church of *Rome* be reckoned a part of the Catholick Church?

T. At the best it is but a small part, as I have before told you, and also a very unsound part. Yea I will not doubt to add, that take the Church of *Rome* even in the largest sense, as comprehending all those that submit to the Pope as Head of the whole Church under Christ, they may justly be reckoned a Schismatical party, dividing themselves from the rest of the Catholick

Catholick Church, setting up a false Head and Governour, and appointing unlawful terms of communion. And though in this respect the Masters and leaders of the faction are in the greatest guilt, yet the people who are seduced are also more or less guilty, according to the capacity they are in of getting better information. But yet notwithstanding this schism they are in, and notwithstanding the many errors and abuses that are amongst them, whilst they profess the Christian Religion, and own their Baptism, they may be allow'd the name of Christians, such as belong to the visible Church of Christ. And (how uncharitable soever they are to us) I hope there are many good Christians amongst them, who do heartily believe the Gospel, and live in obedience to it, according to their knowledge, and who on that account may be stiled true members of the Catholick Church, as all honest, true hearted Christians are, notwithstanding those errors and faults they may be guilty of, which do not utterly violate their Baptismal Covenant, nor destroy that faith and holiness by which we are united to Christ the Head, and so are living members of his body the Church. But still, I say, this title belongs not to them as they are Papists embracing the peculiar tenents of their own Church, but as they are Christians holding the essential Articles of the Christian Faith, together with our own and all other Churches. For as to Popery, it is really a disease, a corruption of the Christian Religion. Yet as a diseased man may have his vitals so sound, that even the Plague or Leprosie may not kill him, so may there be some amongst the Papists in whom the great and common truths of Religion may be so deeply implanted, and so faithfully retained and improved, that the disease of Popery may not prove mortal. Whilst they

they hold the foundation, Jesus Christ and his Gospel, though the hay and stubble which they build upon it shall be burnt, yet may they through the mercy of God in Christ, be saved, *so as by fire*, that is, with great difficulty, 1 Cor. 3. 11, 12, &c. And their case seems most pitiable, who through the disadvantage of their education, want due means of instruction; and what allowances our gracious God will make on that and the like accounts is fittest for us to leave to his own infinite wisdom: Only let us be careful to regulate our own practices by the plain rule of Gods holy Word, which through his favour we so plentifully enjoy.

L. *What you say shall teach me more charity to those of them that are sincere, than they will allow to us. But I do still more and more perceive how little reason there is for my entring into communion with that Church, in which there is so great hazard of Salvation, even no more than for my venturing into a Pest-house full of infected persons, because it's possible some of them may have so much strength of nature as to overcome that dangerous distemper.*

T. The case is much the same.

CHAP. V.

Of some particular points in difference betwixt us and the Church of Rome, and first, of the Popes Supremacy.

L. **H**AVING now received so full satisfaction in this first great point concerning the true Catholick Church, what it is, and who are the members of it, and being upon good grounds firmly perswaded, that the Church of England is a very sound part of this Catholick Church, in whose communion therefore, by Gods grace, I hope to live and die: I would in the next place gladly hear you discourse of some of those particular points wherein chiefly the difference lyes betwixt us and the Church of Rome. For they alledg many plausible reasons, and sometimes quote Scripture for those opinions of theirs which we reject as Popery; and therefore I would gladly be furnisht with solid and good answers to these their Allegations.

T. Most readily shall I afford you my assistance herein. Only let me premise, that suppose in this or that particular opinion you should fancy their Church had the truth on her side, yea though it really was so, yet is this no sufficient reason why you should go over to their communion, since from what has been said you may discern that their Church has no manner of jurisdiction over ours, (which we shall presently make more plain) and you cannot lawfully desert your own Church meerly because you apprehend there is some error commonly received in it, whilst you have liberty

to hold communion with it without owning and professing that error. And though for my own part I declare I do not know so much as any one material point of difference, wherein the Church of *Rome* has the truth on her side, yet this I speak with respect to those who in some particular cases, may be of another mind, and afterward may have occasion to make use of it accordingly. But now proceed to those several points wherein you desire satisfaction.

L. I will so, and shall herein follow the method in which I find them laid down in this little Book, to which I have hitherto had recourse. And the first thing here mention'd is concerning one Pope in the Church, viz. the Bishop of Rome, who is (they say) to be own'd as the visible Head and Governour of the whole Church under Christ.

T. This is indeed the most fundamental point of the Romish faith, by which chiefly they stand distinguished from all other Churches, and as such I have often upon occasion mention'd it already; and have told you that there is not a word of it in the Apostles Creed, which is the summ of the Christian Faith, nor yet in the Holy Scriptures whence that Creed was taken, which may be sufficient prejudice against it: but pray what do they alledg in proof of it?

L. Both this my Author and others commonly plead, that as there is one Emperour in an Empire, one King in a Kingdom, one Master in a family, so there should be one Pope in the Church.

T. I think they should rather infer the quite contrary, that as there is a Master in every Family, a King in every Kingdom, &c. so in every Diocese there should be a Bishop, and in every Nation a Primate, (or chief Bishop) or else a Synod of Bishops, from whom there should lye no appeal to any foreign
E *Bishop*

Bishop whatsoever. It would indeed have look'd a little more like an argument for their purpose, if they could have said, that as there is one Emperor over all the Kings and Kingdoms of the world, so there ought to be one Pope over all Bishops and Churches. But as it appears impossible for one man to govern the whole world, so neither is it much easier for one Bishop to govern all the Christians in the world, especially if all Nations should embrace Christianity, as every good man desires they should. But to let pass their little similies and idle fancies, do you think, if it had been a matter of such necessity to salvation, as Papists say it is, to own the Pope as Christs Vicar, and visible Head of the Catholick Church; do you think, I say, that our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles would not have told us of it, and have given strict command to all Christians to obey him, and to seek to his Infalible judgment in all doubts and controversies, and submit to his authority for the composing of all differences? whereas we now find not one syllable to this purpose either in the Gospel or Epistles: but Christians are exhorted to obey their own Rulers both Sacred and Civil, and to take the Doctrine delivered by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles as the Infalible Rule of their faith and manners; and no other Head of the Church do we read of but our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to whom *all power is given in Heaven and Earth*, as he himself tells us, *Mat. 28. 18.* But he no where tells us that he hath transfer'd all this power to any mortal man, nor settled any person as his Vicar and Deputy-Governour of all the Christian world.

L. *Yes, they say Christ gave this priviledg to Saint Peter, styling him the Rock on which he would build his Church, and giving him the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,*

Heaven, Matt. 16, 18, 19. and from Saint Peter they would have this power to be derived to his Successors the Bishops of Rome.

T. This is the Text which they commonly bring for their purpose, but with how little reason may appear at the very first sight, whilst neither is here confer'd upon St. Peter any such power as to be Ruler over all the Christian Church, nor the least mention made of any privilege whatever to be convey'd from him to his Successors at Rome, or any other where. As to the Rock here spoken of, many of the Ancients understand by it the Doctrine which St. Peter had now profess'd, that great fundamental article of the Christian Faith, that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God*. But let us suppose it to be meant of his person, as he was to be a Preacher of this Doctrine, yet is this no more than what we find said of the rest of the Apostles, Ephes. 2. 20. where Christians are said to be *built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Christ himself being the chief corner-stone*, that is, plainly that these Christians were establish'd in the belief of that Doctrine which had been more obscurely revealed by the Prophets, and of which the Apostles were the chief Preachers, being the founders of the Christian Church, having received their authority from Jesus Christ, the Supreme Ruler and only Head of this his Church. To the same purpose you may see *Rev. 21. 14.* where the twelve Apostles are expressly called twelve foundations. So that as St. Peter made his confession in the name of the rest, in like manner what was said to him belongs to the rest also; which is most plain from *Joh. 20. 23.* where the power of the Keys is given to them all, that their just sentence delivered on Earth shall be ratified in Heaven; and the same doubtless belongs to all their Successors, the Bishops and

52 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

Pastors of the Church, whilst they proceed according to the rules of the Gospel.

L. *If the former Text be not sufficient, they have another ready to produce for the same purpose, viz. Joh. 21. 15, 16, 17. where Saint Peter is commanded by our Blessed Saviour to feed his lambs and sheep, that is, they say, to rule over all Christians every where both small and great, high and low.*

T. They may say what they please, but the Text is very far from saying or intimating any such thing. With such corrupt glosses they may force any Text to serve their turn, as from those words of our Saviour to St. Peter, Luk. 22. 32. *I have pray'd for thee that thy faith fail not,* (that he should not utterly fall away from Christ, notwithstanding his denial of him) hence they would collect that St. Peter had a promise of Infallibility, and this too must belong to the Pope in all ages as his Successor. But as to the Text you last named, would any honest impartial Reader ever imagin, that because St. Peter is so earnestly charged (as the rest of the Apostles in other places are) to be very diligent in Preaching the Gospel, in gathering and feeding the flock of Christ, that he is thereby made Ruler over the Christian world, and the Bishops of Rome after him invested in the same power and jurisdiction, whilst there is not a syllable said of any such power, nor any mention of Successors? Or if these had been concern'd, yet is there any intimation given that those at Rome should have this priviledg rather than the Bishops of Antioch, where they will grant St. Peter to have been Bishop long before he was at Rome.

L. *These things I confess will very hardly be drawn from that Text.*

T. So little countenance doth either that or any other Text give to their pretences, that it would seem more reasonable, and modest for them to wave all talk of Scripture in this case, and depend barely upon tradition with which they use to make much noise; and yet this if truly searched into will do them little service, as I may after shew. At present let it suffice to add, that these Texts they quote were not understood in that sense they put upon them, either by St. Peter himself, or the rest of the Apostles; no nor by the Christian Church for many hundred years after. Whatever precedency St. Peter might have by way of honour, yet do we no where find him claiming any power over his Brethren the Apostles; nor does he once mention any such matter in either of his Epistles, but stiles himself, as the rest did, a Servant and Apostle of Jesus Christ. And when he speaks to the Elders or Bishops of the Church, he does not command them as the Supreme Ruler of all Bishops, but with great meekness exhorts them as a brother, stiling himself an Elder, 1 Pet. 5. 1. and his exhortation to them is at the third vers. that they should not carry themselves as Lords over Gods heritage, (not proudly affect any undue superiority over them) but make themselves examples to the flock, that so they might receive their reward from the Lord Jesus, whom he stiles the chief Shepherd, never adding that under Christ he himself was to be reckoned chief Shepherd here upon Earth. And if it should be lookt upon as only a piece of modesty in St. Peter (a vertue which his pretended Successors have had little share of) that he would say nothing of his own great power, let it be further considered, that as no such power was given him by our blessed Saviour, when there was a contention amongst the Apostles who should be greatest; so

54 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

neither was it ever ascribed to him by any Apostle, either before Christs death or after it. There is no appearance of it in that assembly of the Apostles and Elders, *Act. 15. 6.* when St. Paul writes to the *Romans*, he says nothing of this great priviledg belonging to that See. And when he writes to the *Corinthians* and reproves them for their factions and sidings, whilst some were for *Cephas*, others for *Apollos*, &c. (by which *Cephas* it's plain must be meant St. Peter) yet he says not a word, on this so fair an occasion, to enjoin their preferring *Cephas* before all others; but exhorts them to peace and quietness in their subjection to Christ and his Ministers, without being *puff up for one against another*; yea, writing to the *Galatians* he tells them that upon a just occasion he withstood Saint Peter to the face, saying nothing by way of *Salvo* to his supreme jurisdiction. To conclude, no where do we read in all the New Testament of any other Head of the whole Church but Jesus Christ himself as he is expressly stiled, *Col. 1. 18. Ephes. 1. 22.* and in many other places. Nor would I have named any but that I remember I once met with an ignorant Papist, who quoting *1 Cor. 12. 21. The head cannot say to the feet I have no need of you*, would thence prove that Christ could not be the Head of the Church, because he may say he has no need of us, as if because that place was not meant of him, no other was. But it's no great wonder to hear a Papist arguing so weakly out of Scripture, in which they are so little conversant.

L. *And no greater wonder is it that they have so little regard for that which does them so little service; and particularly I perceive they have no help from it, for the confirming this great article of the Popes Supremacy. But though the Holy Scripture does so little befriend their cause, yet I have often heard them brag much of Councils and*

and Fathers, how these do all with one consent acknowledg and assert this his Supremacy; which though I am not able to disprove, yet I am very backward to take it on their bare word, because I find such ill dealing in their quotation of Scripture, and in other cases.

T. Good reason you have to be so wary, since the boast they make of antiquity being on their side, is notoriously vain and false, and in nothing more palpably than in the present case about the Popes Universal Supremacy. For in none of the ancient Councils is any such priviledge given him, any more than in holy Scripture: which Councils our Church most readily embraces, especially the four first. Yea the direct contrary is decreed in the very first and most famous General Council, that of *Nice*. For therein it was determined as to the Jurisdiction of Bishops, that ancient customs should be retain'd: and that such eminent Bishops as of *Alexandria* and *Antioch* should have the same priviledges in their Precincts, that the Bishop of *Rome* had in his. By which decree, they within their several limits, were made as absolute as he, and were not in the least subject to his power, nor responsible to him for their proceedings. And not to trouble you with many instances, in the next age after this, there was a great Council in *Carthage*, where St. *Austin* himself was present, in which it was expressly decreed, that there should be no appeals to any foreign Bishop, after matters had been determined amongst themselves. This indeed gave offence to the Pope that then was, who pretended that this power of receiving appeals was granted him by the Council of *Nice*. To which the *African* Bishops answered, they had never heard any such matter, but would send purposely to *Nice* it self, or some other neighboring Bishops to make enquiry: they did so, and found all to be meer fraud

46 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

and forgery. Such wicked arts did they of *Rome* use from the beginning, for the justifying and promoting their proud Usurpations. Something of a precedency we grant, there was very anciently allow'd to the Bishop of *Rome*, which had nothing in it of jurisdiction and power over the rest of his brethren, but only was an honour granted him, chiefly on account of *Rome's* being the Seat of the Emperour. Hereupon he had many advantages above other Bishops, and was capable of doing them good Offices at Court, and on that account frequent application was made to him, by such as needed his assistance; and very often in point of meer prudence matters were brought to him from other Churches, and referred to his arbitration. Hither also many of the Eastern Bishops were forced to fly for refuge and succour, when oppress'd by the *Arrians*. By these and such like means, especially by the Emperour's removal more and more into the East, the Bishop of *Rome* strangely encreased in honour and power, and at length in pride and insolence. So that in succeeding times, as a secular spirit of ambition and covetousness began to infect the greatest Churchmen, there were most vehement contests betwixt the Bishops of *Rome* and of *Constantinople* for the preheminance. For in one General Council it had been determined, that because the Emperour had his residence at *Constantinople*, the Bishop of that City should have the same priviledges which the Bishop of *Rome* had formerly enjoy'd for the same reason. And one of the Bishops of *Constantinople* at length took upon him to stile himself Universal Bishop; thereby (say learned men) claiming rather honour than any jurisdiction over his brethren. Yet *Gregory* then Bishop of *Rome* was so incensed at it, that he positively declared, that whoever should assume such
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a proud title was a certain forerunner of Antichrist. This was about six hundred years after our Saviour. And not long after it, *Boniface* the third, Bishop of *Rome*, by means of the wicked *Phocas*, who had murdered his Master *Mauricius*, and was chosen Emperour in his stead, got his Church to be stiled the Supreme of all other Churches, though with much ado, as their own Historian expresses it. But this Supremacy the body of the *Greek Church* utterly refused to acknowledge, and so does to this day, though they of *Rome* have several times used all manner of arts and tricks to draw them into a compliance; still persisting in the same methods of fraud and violence for the confirming and securing their arrogant usurpations, which at first they made use of to introduce them.

L. *But they say it's necessary to the unity of the Church that there should be one Supreme Head and Governour.*

T. Very true, and so I have told you there is, namely the Lord Jesus Christ the only Head of the Catholick Church, the Unity whereof consists in the subjection of the members to this same Head, by their belief of the same Doctrine, and obedience to the same holy Laws, and by living in mutual love and charity, and Christian communion one with another. And herein most plainly doth the Apostle place the unity of the Christian Church (*Ephes. 4.*) that they have one Lord, one Faith, &c. but not in their having one chief Ruler, under Christ here on Earth, whether Pope or Council; only they are bound to live in obedience to their own Princes and Bishops in the respective Dominions and Churches where they reside.

L. *They say that Christ alone is the invisible Head, but the Pope is the visible Head of the Church.*

T. This

T. This is a distinction we no where meet with in holy Scripture, and therefore do justly reject it as the fond imagination of their own brain, coin'd only to serve a turn. But instead of detaining you with any further discourse on this subject, I shall refer you to the Learned Dr. Barrow's excellent Treatise, which handles it at large, if you have leisure to peruse it, wherein this pretence of the Popes Supremacy is so shamefully exposed, and so fully confuted, as cannot but give abundant satisfaction to any intelligent and impartial Reader. And this is done with such strength of reason, and such full proof from all antiquity, that I am apt to think there will scarce be found any of the Champions for the *Romish* cause (as bold men as they be) so hardy and impudent as to attempt the returning any answer to that his most solid and impregnable Discourse.

L. Yet it's wonder if they do not: for they seem most zealous in contending for this above all other Doctrines.

T. And will you blame them? since if this be disown'd, the whole fabrick of Popery falls to the ground. For if the Pope be not Head of the Church, then all Princes in their own Dominions will be found to be Supreme Moderators and Governours in all causes, and over all persons, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil: (which is our meaning when we stile the King Head of our Church) and then what reformation they with their Clergy have made, according to the Holy Scriptures, will appear justifiable. Yea, then these Princes may confer all manner of Church-preferments in their own Kingdoms, without asking the Popes leave or expecting his confirmation; and all Ecclesiastical causes may be determined without any appeals to Rome. And if the King of England may do this
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in his Dominions (as most certainly he may) then may the King of *France* do the same in his (as if the Pope should provoke him probably he might) and so may all others if they please. By which means at length the Bishop of *Rome* would be confined to his own Diocess; and his Spiritual power be shut up in much the same limits with his Temporal. But alas! what an utter ruin would this be to the Papal dignity and honour? How would their treasures be drain'd, their glory sullied, and their power abated, yea even reduced to nothing? No wonder therefore, if *Bellarmino*, in the Preface to his Books of the *Romish* Bishop, stiles this Doctrine of his Supremacy, the very summ or chief point of Christianity: Had he said of Popery it had been true enough. For 'tis plain they look upon this as one of the most weighty articles of their faith. Let this be denied, our conformity to their Church in all other things will signifie little or nothing. As it appears in *Henry* the Eighth's case; for though he still retain'd the main Body of Popery, yet because he rejected this power of the Pope, he was reckoned and treated as an Heretick and Apostate. Whereas let this be but own'd, and you shall be dispensed with in many other things. As our Historians tell us it was offered to *Queen Elizabeth* that we should have our Service in *English*, Communion in both kinds, &c. provided she would submit to the Popes authority, and own his Supremacy.

L. This is, I perceive, so useful an opinion, that they have great reason to be zealous in asserting it; but it doth so apparently serve their own ends, that were it for nothing else I should mightily suspect the truth of it, but by the very slender proof they bring either from Scripture or Reason I am sufficiently assured that it is notoriously false.

T. Good

65 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

T. Good ground you have so to be ; yet pray consider what mighty stress they lay upon this idle opinion, whilst they confine the Catholick Church to those who embrace it, and Excommunicate all others as Hereticks and Schismatics. Yea, such homage they pay to this their great Master, that even in things of an indifferent nature, they will rather yield obedience to his commands than to those of their own Prince. And that's plain from this instance amongst others, that for a considerable time in *Queen Elizabeths* days, the Papists came to our Churches, but after the Pope had sent order to the contrary they generally desisted. And I have heard some eminent Papists alledging the Popes Prohibition as the chief reason of their not taking the Oath of Allegiance. So certainly true it is, that a Papist acting according to the rules of his own Church, can be no further a good Subject than the Pope will give him leave. Nor has any Doctrine been more destructive of the rights of Princes, and the duty of subjects than this of the Popes Supremacy. In pursuance of this, or for the promoting it, has the peace of the world in these latter ages been greatly disturbed, Kings and Kingdoms Excommunicated, and endeavoured to be destroy'd. Yea, for the disowning of this, according to their merciless tenents, must we poor Protestants be made utterly miserable both in this life, and that to come. Here we must be condemned to fire and faggot, and hereafter to everlasting burnings, even because we will not believe the Bishop of *Rome* to be Christs Vicar on Earth.

L. *For the sake of this I am more apt to suspect the rest of their Popish Doctrines. But though the Pope be not Christs Vicar, yet is it not too severe to stile him Antichrist ; for so it seems many of our Writers do, at which my Author is*
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very angry, and says it is a calumny and a lye, and most intollerable stupidity to assert it.

T. Certainly not greater than to assert his Supremacy : But pray what reason does he give for this his anger and his confidence?

L. He says that Antichrist shall be a Jew, a particular man, at the end of the world, whereas the Popes be successively many, of divers Nations, and many ages ago.

T. Whilst he gives you only his bare word for all this there would need no more confutation than a bare denial. Nor shall I give you or my self the trouble to search into the *Revelation*, or any other obscure places of Scripture, thence to prove the Pope to be Antichrist. Only you may call to mind the saying of Pope Gregory, even now quoted, That he who should take on him the title of Universal Bishop, is the forerunner of Antichrist. And so far as Pope Gregory's Infallibility may be allow'd, they may serve to prove his Successors to be an Antichristian generation of men. But without going about positively to define what is meant by Antichrist in the New Testament, that which I would chiefly recommend to your serious consideration in this matter is this, That though the Bishops of Rome were at first very pious and good men, and so generally continued for some ages, yet as they grew in wealth, they did by degrees strangely degenerate from the virtue and piety of their Predecessors, till at length they with the Grandees of the Clergy, who are the Governing part of the Popish faction, have most apparently set up and pursued a design exactly contrary to that of our blessed Saviour, which design of theirs may therefore well enough be stiled Antichristian, and so may the abettors of it; who have by the most vile and unchristian methods carried on the same.

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To make this manifest in a few words, consider that our blessed Saviour hath expressly told us that his Kingdom is not of this world, does not consist in riches, honours, and worldly dignity ; but his whole business was to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of mens souls, by bringing us to the love and practice of piety and humility, righteousness and mercy, purity and sobriety, and all true virtue and goodness. But now on the contrary, he who stiles himself Christs Vicar plainly enough declares that his Kingdom is of this world. For what is it they seek after, and so earnestly contend for but worldly greatness and power, pomp and glory ; to make all men pay homage and obedience to them. And under this pretence of being Vicar of Christ and Successor of *St. Peter*, have the Popes for many ages exalted themselves above all that is called God, I mean above all Civil power, above Kings and Emperours, who are indeed Gods Vicegerents on earth. They have set their feet on the necks of Princes, and kickt off their Crowns at their pleasure ; deposed and destroy'd Kings, absolved their Subjects from the Allegiance due to them, and disposed of their Kingdoms to others so far as they had power. For their own secular interests they have often stir'd up Wars amongst Christian Princes, yea themselves have maintain'd and prosecuted the same. They have excited the people to Civil Wars and Seditions, and sometimes even drawn the Son to rebel against his own Father. They have set up where they could a most cruel and bloody Inquisition for the destroying of those whom they call Hereticks, even all that will not submit to their tyranny. By slaughters in the open field, and publick Massacres ; by burning at the Stake, or murdering in Prison, have they cut off thousands if not millions of innocent

innocent and good Christians. Judge then whether are these men acted by the Spirit of Christ, yea or no?

L. *I think not, since he tells us that he came into the world to save mens lives, and not to destroy them.*

T. To this let me add that whilst they keep up the name of Christianity (and so may be said to sit in the Temple of God) they have for their own ends most grossly corrupted this holy Religion, ordering all their Doctrines and practices so as may conduce most (not to the good of souls, but) to encrease the wealth and honour of the Pope and his Clergy. Multitudes of whom, especially those of higher rank, have lived in pomp and pride, yea wallowed in all riot and luxury; and by the bad examples they give, by the loose Doctrines they teach, and the large Indulgences they grant upon easie terms, they have done much to promote and encourage wickedness amongst the people. Judg then, I say, whether is all this pride and ambition, this sensuality and impurity, this bloodiness and cruelty, falshood and violence, which is the very natural genius and spirit of Popery (properly so called) whether is it agreeable to the temper and design of Christianity?

L. *I rather think it directly contrary thereto.*

T. So far therefore it may justly be stiled Anti-christian. Yet herein do not mistake me, as if I was so uncharitable as to censure all Papists to be such proud, cruel, vicious persons. No, far be it from me, I hope there are many honest souls among them, both of Clergy and Laity, who (as I have before said) do according to their knowledg serve God in the simplicity of their hearts. But this I assert that consider Popery as a thing distinct from Christianity, (the chief

chief Doctrine of it being that of the Popes Supremacy) it hath been and at this day is carried on by such ways as I have named, even by force and fraud, by plots and treasons, by war and bloodshed. And the governing part among them who are chief factors for this design, the Court and Conclave of *Rome*, with all their busie active instruments up and down the world, are led and acted by such an Antichristian or Unchristian spirit, as I have before described. Most plainly do they prefer their own cause and party far above Christianity; the greatness and glory of the Pope and his Clergy before the honour and interest of our blessed Saviour, and the salvation of precious souls. Insomuch that with these Grandees Religion is little more than a bare name, and serves meerly for a cloak and pretence, under the disguise whereof they can more effectually pursue their own carnal ends. And for the obtaining of these they have so strangely altered it, that by the use they make of it, and the colours they give it, a man would be apt to think that the great design of our Saviours coming into the world was not so much to redeem and save mankind, as to advance his pretended Vicar the Pope, and to make him the greatest and most absolute Monarch in the whole world. Whereas in truth nothing can be more contrary to the life and temper of our Saviour, and to the whole tenour of his Holy Religion, than such an ambitious, lordly spirit, proudly affecting dominion and honour, and the great things of this present world. On this account then you may perceive, how justly the Pope and his adherents, who make it their chief business to promote this his Temporal greatness, to the infinite prejudice of Christs true Religion, may justly be stiled an Antichristian faction. And if after all this it shall be found that
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though neither of them upon holy Scripture, as I doubt not but to manifest; but tell me first what says he of Purgatory.

L. He says that the Apostle informs us (in 1 Cor. 3.) that there is a fire in the other world, in which some slight faults of good people must be purged away before they can attain Heaven.

T. But if you read the place you'll find no such matter. There's not a word said of fire in another world; or that mens faults are done away by fire. Only the Apostle is there speaking of those who add their own fancies and false Doctrines to the Truths of Christianity, which Doctrines of theirs shall in due time be strictly examined, and upon a narrow search shall be discovered and rejected, even as the fire consumes hay and stubble. And if the men that preached these Doctrines shall be found to hold the foundation, so as to be preserved from destruction, yet will they escape with great difficulty, as a man that's saved out of the fire. And indeed this Text doth most aptly represent to us the condition of the *Romish* Church; for whilst they retain the foundation of Christian Religion, they do build thereupon hay and stubble, many false and corrupt Doctrines as an excellent Writer of our Church in a Sermon upon this Text, gives a full account in a little room. And amongst others he reckons this of Purgatory, of which, with a pleasant sharpness, he there says, that though they have got to themselves gold and silver by this Doctrine (and that of Indulgences which depends upon it) yet is it as errant hay and stubble as the rest, that is, vain and false. For neither this nor any other Text speaks a word concerning souls being held in Purgatory flames, and that they may be eased there, or released thence, by the Masses that are said for them,
or

or by the alms that were either left by themselves, or are given by their friends on their behalf.

L. But he attempts to prove both a Purgatory and praying for the Dead from 2 Mac. 12. where it's said to be an holy and healthful cogitation to pray for the Dead, that they may be freed from their sins, that is, says he, from venial sins, for of mortal no pardon can hereafter be obtain'd.

T. To let pass his distinction of venial and mortal sins, is he not, think you, reduced to miserable straits, when he is forced to run to the *Apocrypha* for a Text, to a Book which was never own'd for Canonical by the Jewish Church, no nor by the Christian Church in St. Jerome's time, which was about four hundred years after our Saviour? Neither yet will this Text serve their turn; for if you look into the place you will find, that when Judas went to bury those that were slain, he found under their coats things consecrated to Idols; whereupon both he and the rest that were with him, betook themselves to earnest prayer for the pardon of this great sin; which prayer might respect the living rather than the dead, that God would not punish the rest of the people for this their crime. And for the very same reason might he send money to Jerusalem, to offer a sin-offering, as is after related. And though another gloss is put upon it in the History, as if all this were done for the dead, yet may this be the Historians own opinion, or perhaps rather his that abridged the History: for Chap. 2. 23. he tells you that he abridged five Books of *Jason*, and at the end begs pardon for what he may have done amiss, which is not like the stile of an inspired Writer. But what if Judas's design was indeed such as the Historian relates? Is his example a sufficient warrant for us, when we have no rule for it in the Word of God? Nay nor yet after all, will this Text

justify their Doctrine of Purgatory, since here's nothing said of any pains they were in at present, only he might hope to procure mercy for them at the Resurrection.

L. *But pray was not this sin of Idolatry a mortal one, for which, according to their own Doctrine, sinners go to Hell and not to Purgatory? therefore by their principles this practice of Judas cannot be allow'd.*

T. Very true: but for this *Bellarmino* has a shift at hand, that *Judas* in charity hoped they might repent just when they were at the point of death, and therefore in that hope offered those Sacrifices. But I wonder how he came to know *Judas's* thoughts so well; and 'tis hard to imagine what time they should have for repentance, who were slain in the battel. Has your Author no better proof out of Scripture for his opinion than this comes to?

L. *He names no more Texts but these.*

T. And truly he might as well have named none at all. Others do insist on some other places, but to as little purpose, which I shall not now take notice of, since I suppose he took these for the strongest, and you see what little strength there is in them.

L. *I hear them speak much of the custom of the ancients in praying for the dead.*

T. But herein they are guilty of great sophistry and foul dealing: for the prayers anciently used were nothing like those that are now in the *Romish Church*, nor do they in the least prove the ancient Christians belief of a Purgatory. For they in their prayers made a commemoration of the most eminently pious and holy persons, even of Prophets, Apostles and Martyrs, as an honour to their memory, blessing and praising God for them; in some sort as we do in our Church, at the end of the Prayer for the Church militant;

tant; where we bleſs God for all his Saints and ſervants departed this life in his faith and fear, &c. Beſides this they prayed for their joyful Reſurrection, and the conſummation of their happineſs: which was in effect no more than to pray for the coming of Chriſt, when all believers ſhall be advanced to the height of glory. And not unlike this is an expreſſion in our Liturgy, in the Office for Burial, where we pray, *That God would accompliſh the number of his Elect, and baſten his Kingdom, that we wiſh all thoſe who are departed in the true faith of his holy name, may have our perfect conſummation and bliſs, both in body and ſoul, in his eternal glory.* And yet it's well known how far our Church is from acknowledging a Purgatory; neither therefore, from any ſuch expreſſions uſed in their prayers, can it rationally be concluded that the Church anciently own'd this opinion. Of this you may find a full account in A. B. Uſher's answer to the Jeſuits Challenge. But if among ſome of the Ancients there may be found expreſſions that go ſomewhat farther than what I have named, yet for many ages there was nothing like to the preſent practice of the Church of Rome. Neither doth it beſeem us in ſuch caſes to be governed by any other authority than what is Divine. Now we certainly know there is not one place of Scripture, either in the Old Teſtament or the New, where we have any command given us to offer up prayers for the dead; nor any promiſe made, that if we do ſo, it ſhall any thing avail or help them. Our Lord has taught us nothing of this in his moſt comprehensive form: Nor do we find one example of it recorded in all the Bible. How dare we then in ſo weighty a matter make ſuch addreſſes to God, when we have no manner of encouragement or allowance ſo to do? wherefore for this very reaſon amongſt others a man cannot lawfully

70 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

joyn with the *Romish Church* in her prayers.

L. *Since there is nothing from Scripture, or the best antiquity to justify this practice, what is it that Papists most relye upon in this case?*

T. Even upon pretended revelations, and a company of ridiculous Monkish stories, of Souls appearing after their decease, begging help from their friends, that they might be delivered out of the pains of Purgatory. But whatever tales they tell in their fabulous Legends, we that read the holy Scriptures, can find nothing there of any such place or pains: *The wicked go into everlasting punishment, and the righteous into life eternal*, but not a word said of a Purgatory for either of these, or of a middle state for some middle sort of men, that are neither to be ranked amongst the wicked nor the righteous.

L. *But is there not a middle state for souls commonly acknowledged by Protestant Divines?*

T. This much I think they generally acknowledge, that the souls of good men being separate from the body, are not suddenly advanced to the utmost height of happiness, nor will be till the Resurrection and great Judgment-day: neither it's probable, are the wicked till then thrown into the sorest punishment: And so far the condition of both may be said to be a middle state betwixt what it is now on earth, and what it will be after the day of Judgment. But in this state we know of nothing to be done either by the persons themselves, or by any on earth for them, to mend their condition. The souls of the righteous are in the hand of the Lord, in rest and peace, cheerfully expecting the perfection of their glory and joy: and the condition of the wicked may seem most like that of the fallen Angels (as it's described *Jude v. 6.*) in everlasting chains of darkness, reserved to the
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Judgment of the great day. And betwixt these already is the great gulf fixt, that there is no passing from one to the other, to find or give relief. Much less can the prayers or alms of surviving friends afford any refreshment to miserable souls. And some there are even of the Church of *Rome* so modest and ingenuous, that they have discoursed much at this rate concerning the middle state of souls departed; and have exprest their opinion, that it was not so much the prayers said for the dead that gave them relief, as the charitable temper they died in when they left money for pious uses. But for the freedom such Writers have taken, both they and their writings have been severely censured and condemned at *Rome*.

L. *What makes them so zealous in the case?*

T. You need not go far for a reason, when you consider how much gain is hereby brought in to the Crafts masters; what vast sums of money are given to the Church by dying men, frighted with the dreadful stories of Purgatory. What will they not then give for a speedy deliverance thence? And this they are taught not to hope for without good store of Masses, for which the Priests that say them expect to be well paid. So that there is a great deal of truth in that common blunt saying, that Purgatory-fire keeps the Popes Kitchen warm. No wonder then if they are so angry with those that go about to quench it. This Doctrine moreover it is that chiefly keeps up the market for Indulgences, which, whatever they do now, were heretofore wont to bring in vast treasures to the Popes Coffers, by several arts which he used in putting them off.

L. *On what pretence do they give out these Indulgences?*

2196.

72 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

T. Sell them you should rather have said: for so they have used to do, and did it at such a shameful rate in *Germany*, as gave the first occasion for the Reformation there. But to answer your question, their pretence is, that there is a vast treasure of merits in the Church, and that not only of Christ's but of the Saints too, who have done and suffered much more than was necessary for themselves, so that they can spare somewhat for others. And this treasure you must know is in the Popes keeping, who can by the fulness of his power, dispense it as he pleases, and apply it to particular persons, in what measure and upon what terms he thinks fit. And the benefit of these is said to be the freeing them from temporary punishments due for faults already pardoned, and this freedom they are to enjoy, not only upon earth in being eased of long penances, but also in Purgatory, from whence they shall sooner be delivered by virtue of these Indulgences.

L. *I do not well understand how there is a punishment still due after the fault's pardoned.*

T. Nor any body else I think: for a fault is then said to be pardoned when the punishment is remitted. Indeed God may so far pardon a Penitent as not to punish him with eternal misery, and yet he may inflict bodily punishments in this life; as a malefactor may have a pardon for his life, and yet may be burnt in the hand or the like: but so far as a man is punished, so far he was not pardoned.

L. *Do not these Indulgences then free men from bodily punishments which otherwise they must undergo?*

T. That indeed would be somewhat if they could free men from Gout and Stone, and all such diseases as do either naturally flow from their vices, or are inflicted by God as punishments for them: then, I say, a man would not grudge to purchase Indulgences at a dear

dear rate : for besides his ease and health, it might save all the money spent upon Physicians. But this alas ! the great Champions for Indulgences dare not pretend to, and full easily they might be confuted if they did. Wherefore *Bellarmino* confesses they do not free men from natural evils, diseases, or the like, which are the fruits of sin ; nor yet from such fines and penalties as may in Courts be inflicted for their offences. What then is left besides the imaginary pains of Purgatory ? But by the little force their Indulgences have in this world, a man has cause to suspect they will be no more effectual in the other. But the best on't is, no body comes thence to tell tales how they are cheated, and so the trade goes on smoothly. And were it mony only that the poor people are cheated of by these vile arts, the matter were not much : but alas ! we have great cause to fear that many are hereby deluded to the loss of their immortal souls, of more value than the whole world ; instead of a temporary Purgatory, from which they hoped to be secured at easier rates than a timely repentance, and thorough reformation how many, fall into that eternal misery which is threatned to the wicked and impenitent, from whence no money nor Masses, no prayers nor tears can ever release them ?

L. Yet they say we Protestants are strangely unkind to our friends departed, that we will not so much as put up a prayer to God for them, but seem quite to neglect and forget them.

T. They have little reason to accuse us for this, since of all the instances of charity any where recommended in Scripture, we never find this mentioned, that we should pray for our friends after they are dead. Why then should we pretend to such a piece of charity as neither God hath commanded, nor any the most

most holy charitable persons of old ever practised? If it were fit for us to give way to our own fancies, why might it not look like a piece of charity to pray for those in Hell, that their pains may be mitigated or shortned? But have we any warrant from God so to do? Or dare Papists themselves presume to do it? Such as these we look on out of the reach of prayers. And for those in Heaven, they surely are past the need of them, farther than what was before mentioned, that whilst we pray for the coming of Christ, we therein comprehend the consummation of their felicity. How little reason then have we to pray for our friends departed? The greatest kindness that I know we can shew them, is to preserve a grateful remembrance of their piety and virtue, to imitate their good examples, obey their counsels, and please our selves with the forethoughts of that happy time when we shall follow them into glory. Moreover since we believe that our prayers cannot profit our friends when they are dead, this may well make us more industrious to do them all the good we can whilst they are alive. And if by Gods blessing on our endeavours, they become truly pious and good in *this* world, we shall have no need to pray for them when they are gone into the *other*; but rather will they have cause to praise God for us.

By this time I hope you perceive how little cause there is of separation from our Church, on account of our not using prayers for the deliverance of souls out of Purgatory. Since we have no reason to believe there is any such place, nor consequently to use any such prayers. But yet I will add, if any man should be of another opinion, and fancy this to be a lawful piece of charity, yet would not this justifie his separation from us: for though he thought our publick prayers in this to be defective, yet I hope this defect does not

not render the rest unlawful. If he meet not with a prayer agreeable to his own private conceit in this matter, yet he may joyn very chearfully in those we do use, which are most plainly agreeable to the will of God revealed in his word, which holy word ought to be the rule both of our belief and worship. And when we vary from this rule, we cannot pray in faith, with any well-grounded confidence of being heard: as particularly they cannot, who pray for the release of souls from Purgatory, or for the easing of their pains there, seeing they have neither precept nor promise, no nor so much as any example in all Scripture to warrant their so doing.

L. *I am convinced they have not: nor will I by the grace of God ever offer up any such unwarrantable prayers.*

CHAP. VII.

Of Transubstantiation.

T. **W**HAT is the next Popish Doctrine your Author mentions?

L. *That of Christs Personal Presence in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, about which I shall be glad to hear you discourse, and to answer the arguments he brings for it.*

T. Now then we come to their great Doctrine of Transubstantiation, viz. that the natural substance of the Bread and Wine in the Communion, is by Consecration changed into the substance of Christs body and blood, which is certainly one of the most absurd and unreasonable Doctrines that ever was taught, and yet there

76 *Of Points wherein we and Papiſts differ,*

there is nothing they aſſert with more zeal and fierceneſs : and in Queen *Maries* days accounted it reaſon enough to burn poor Proteſtants for Hereticks if they would not profeſs it. This being commonly one of the firſt queſtions put to them, What ſay you to the Sacrament of the Altar ? For ſo they uſed to ſtile the Eucharift or Holy Communion. Well, pray let me hear what arguments your Author brings for this ſtrange opinion.

L. He firſt attempts to prove it from thoſe words of our Saviour at the inſtitution of this Holy Sacrament, This is my body which is given for you, Luk. 22. 19. and he adds, that Chriſt now making his Will, his words muſt needs be very clear.

T. This indeed is the Text they commonly inſiſt on, and the words in themſelves are clear enough : but the ſtrange comment they make on them does certainly render them the moſt obſcure and unintelligible that ever were uttered. For pray tell me, does it not ſeem a wonder of wonders, paſt all underſtanding, that our Bleſſed Saviour, who was there alive in the miſt of his Diſciples, ſhould at the ſame time himſelf give them his natural body and blood to be eaten and drunk by them, and after this ſtill remain alive ſound and whole as he was before without any manner of change ?

L. It ſeems very ſtrange and unlikely, I confeſs, at firſt hearing.

T. And yet we never find the Apoſtles making any objection, or raiſing any ſcruple about it : Nor does our Bleſſed Saviour ſay any thing to prevent or remove ſuch objections as might eaſily be made. May we not then fairly infer hence, that they underſtood theſe words in the ſame plain, eaſie ſenſe, which ſuch expreſſions in like caſes do very evidently carry along with

with them, namely that the Bread and Wine were the Symbols and Sacramental signs and tokens of his Body and Blood : and the breaking of the one, and pouring out of the other, did very fitly represent the wounding and bruising of his Body, and the shedding of his Blood for our sakes. Neither do we say, as they accuse us, that these are bare figures of Christs Body and Blood; but do constantly teach that the benefits of his Death and Passion are hereby effectually communicated to worthy receivers. Here we make a solemn and most thankful commemoration of the Sacrifice which Christ offered on the Cross, and in feeding on the holy Elements we feast upon that Sacrifice, and so renew and confirm our Covenant with God in Christ, giving up our selves to him as an holy and obedient people; and by these Seals of his Covenant the great God assures us of the truth of his Promises, and gives himself to us as our God and reconciled Father in Jesus Christ. And by this means our faith is strengthened, our love to God and man is quickened and inflamed, and all other graces increased, and the Divine comforts of his Spirit afforded : and so *the flesh of Christ becomes meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, nourishing our souls to eternal life.*

L. *All this is plain and easie to understand.*

T. It is so, and most natural it is after this manner to explain our Saviours words, as being most agreeable to the common way of speaking in like cases, where that which is a sign or Sacrament is said to be the very thing which it denotes and represents. Thus the Paschal Lamb is said to be the Lords Passover, of which it was a commemoration, *Exod. 12. 11.* So in *Pharaoh's* Dream the ears of corn and the kine are said to be years of plenty and of famine, because they signified the same. And a plain place to this purpose

purpose you have, 1 Cor. 10. 4. where it's said *that Rock was Christ*, because it did prefigure or typifie him. So when our Saviour says, *This Cup is the New Testament in my blood*, what other sence can these words have, but that this Wine represents his Blood, which was shed to ratifie and confirm the New Testament or Covenant of Grace and mercy, which God hath made with all true believers through his Son?

L. He quotes also Joh. 6. where much is said concerning our eating Christs flesh, and drinking his blood. But from what you have already said, I cannot but think it most reasonable to understand the words in a spiritual sence, as signifying our feeding upon Christ by faith, and so deriving grace from him into our souls.

T. You have good reason so to understand it, especially if you consider, that though this Discourse in the sixth of St. John may in a secondary sence be applied to this holy Sacrament, yet it seems most probable that our Saviour in this Chapter is chiefly speaking of his Doctrines, especially that great one of his dying for the sins of the world, and of his precepts and promises, these are to be believed and embraced, duly improved, and thoroughly digested into our souls for their spiritual nourishment, as common food is received for the support of the body. For when the people followed him chiefly for the loaves (as he tells them ver. 26.) he thence took occasion to exhort them, not so much to labour for the meat which perisheth as for that which endures to everlasting life. As in Joh. 4. from the womans coming to draw water, he enters upon a discourse of that living water which he will give to all that believe on him. Now who is so dull as not to take this spiritually, as being meant of the graces and comforts of the Spirit? And why should we not so understand this sixth Chapter, where he re-
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presents himself and Doctrine under the notion of bread? To omit many other reasons that might be alledged for it, our Saviour himself in my apprehension, does plainly tell us that we ought so to understand him, *v. 63.* for when the *Capernaïtes* mistook his meaning, and seemed to take his words in some such gross and carnal sense as Papists at this day put upon them, he tells them that *the flesh profiteth nothing, that the spirit gives life, and his words are spirit and life,* such as that by our embracing of them there is a spiritual and divine life convey'd to our souls, quickning and renewing them, and so disposing them for life eternal.

L. But says my Author, his flesh did profit much in that he gave it for the redemption of the world.

T. Most true it did so: but our eating of his flesh, the very natural substance of it, supposing it could be done, would profit us nothing. What goes into the month can no more sanctifie the heart than it can defile it. But it is by our believing in a Crucified Saviour, by our loving and serving him, and conforming our selves to his likeness that we attain eternal life. Whilst his words remain in us and have power over us for the forming and governing of our hearts and lives, this while Christ dwells in us and we in him. And whilst the graces of his Spirit are communicated to us by his Word and Sacraments, we are truly fed and nourished by him in a spiritual manner.

L. To this purpose my Author himself sometimes seems to speak: for he says the manner of Christ's real presence in the Sacrament is not gross, sensual and carnal, like that of other flesh which is daily eaten, but as the Church holds and believes it, *Mystical and Sacramental.*

T. How wisely then had their Church done to have been content with saying it to be thus Mystical and

and Sacramental, without presuming positively to define after what manner the Body and Blood of Christ are here present, as most unreasonably they have done, and have murdered thousands for not assenting to these their bold determinations. And this your Author plainly contradicts himself: for he asserts that the Sacramental Bread and Wine are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ, by the mighty power of God, as the water was turned into wine, *Joh. 2.* and that certainly was true, plain wine, in which there was nothing mystical or obscure. And according to this their Doctrine, must the eating of Christs Body be understood in a carnal sense: why else does he say soon after, that if Christ should be seen, they should have an horreur to eat him? So that eat him it seems they do, and that in such a manner as they should have an horreur to do it if they could see him.

L. And so one would think they should have at the very thought of it, though they see him not.

T. But in the mean time does it not seem strange that the Natural body and blood of Christ should be there, and yet neither of them seen nor any way perceived?

L. Truly very strange: but they say this is no more than what we find Luk. 4. 30. where Christ made himself invisible, and so past through the midst of his enemies without being seen of them.

T. It's only said there, that he past through the midst of them, and so he might do by conveying himself swiftly away. Or suppose he made himself invisible for a while, this we may easily enough apprehend that it might be done, by hindring the clearness of their sight, or by other ways. But now for thousands of people in all ages and places, having their senses

senses sound, and the object at a due distance, to be so strangely deceived is a thing utterly incredible. Nor do we read a syllable in that or any other place, that our Saviour presented to the people some object which had the appearance of quite another thing, and yet was really himself and not that other thing which it appeared to be. For thus they teach it is in the present case. Here is the most plain appearance of Bread and Wine, and yet no such substance; but the substance of Christs Body and Blood whilst there's no appearance of them. Christ is before them, and yet they cannot see him, they take him into their hands, and yet cannot feel him. Nay their sight, their feeling, their smell and taste do all perceive Bread and Wine, and nothing else, and yet do they confidently affirm that no Bread or Wine is there, but the very substance of Christs flesh and blood, though they discern no such thing.

L. This is all wonderful indeed, but they say this change is wrought by the mighty power of God in a miraculous manner as he made the world of nothing.

T. If any such change there were, we should grant it to be miraculous: but what a strange sort of miracle is this that after its wrought, there's yet no appearance of it? We dispute not about the manner how it's wrought, but we say we can perceive no such thing to be done. It was not thus in the instance he gives, for though the world was made of nothing in a miraculous manner, yet being made, the works of God do visibly appear, and so do declare his invisible power and Godhead. But if now a man should tell us that God had created a New Heaven, and a New Earth, whilst we can see no manner of change, but all things continue as they were in the old world, who would believe him? yet such is the invisible change they plead for

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for in the Sacrament ; which is ſuch a ſort of miracle as never was heard tell of either in the Old Teſtament or the New. For the miracles which our Bleſſed Saviour wrought, they plainly appear'd to the ſenſes of thoſe who were preſent, by that means confirming their belief of his Doctrines. The Doctrines was to be *believed*, but the miracle was to be *ſeen*, which confirm'd that Doctrines. To inſtance in one for all, When the water was turn'd into wine, (*Job. 2.*) it was now ſeen and taſted to be true wine, only it was much better than common wine. Otherwiſe do you think, if it had ſtill had the colour, the ſmell and the taſte of water, that the people would have been perſwaded it was turned into wine ? Would they have been ſatisfied with an odd ſtory, that the ſubſtance was wine, though the accidents of water ſtill remain'd, or with any ſuch idle unintelligible talk ? Would ſuch a ſort of miracle as this that could no way be perceived, ever have been believed ? Or would the pretence to ſuch miracles ever have gain'd Diſciples to our Saviour ? And yet ſuch a one is this of Tranſubſtantiation.

L. So very ſtrange and unaccountable it is, that it never ought to be admitted without very good proof.

T. And is it not then almoſt as ſtrange that ever any man ſhould believe ſo abſurd a Doctrines, not only without good proof, but even againſt the expreſs words of Scripture, as well as againſt his reaſon and ſenſes ?

L. No matter for ſenſe and reaſon, they cry, but how do you prove it to be againſt Scripture ?

*T. It may be proved from thoſe places which tell us of our Saviours being received into Heaven (as *Act. 3. 21.*) and he cannot at the ſame time be corporally preſent upon earth and in heaven too.*

L. But did he not appear to St. Paul and others after his Aſcenſion ?

T. Yes,

T. Yes, he did so, yet does not this prove him to be then corporally present; for he might render himself visible to them without descending, as he did to *St. Stephen*, or he might appear to them in a Vision, and make himself present to their imagination. Or he might be said to appear to them by his Angel whom he sent. For thus in Scripture, it's commonly said, God appear'd to this or that man, when he sent his Angel to him with some message. But besides this, the plain words of the Evangelists, when they relate the institution of this Holy Sacrament, do directly contradict this Doctrine of Transubstantiation. For they tell us that our Saviour *took bread and blessed it, and brake it*; even the very same that he took that he blest, and what he blest that he broke, and what is this but true bread, as to its natural substance? Only in a mystical and spiritual sense it was made the Body of Christ by Consecration. And thus also *St. Paul* calls it Bread after Consecration, no less than three times in three verses together, *1 Cor. 11. 26, &c.*

L. *This my Author grants, but says it's called so, because the external accidents of bread do still remain.*

T. That is because the colour, shape and taste of bread do still remain, with all other qualities of common bread. Now I beseech you can there be any better or surer way to discover what is the substance or nature of a thing, than by such accidents, such outward sensible appearances as these? How can we distinguish bread from a stone, or water from wine, but by the colour, the smell, the taste or the like? And thus do we here distinguish bread from flesh, and wine from blood; and do believe that to be bread which is both call'd so in Scripture, and which our own eyes discern to be indeed so.

84 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

L. *But he says faith, will teach us otherwise from the Word of God.*

T. Nay on the contrary, you see Gods word calls it bread after the Consecration, and therefore both our faith and our senses assure us that it is bread. Nor does this in the least contradict our Saviours words when he says, *This is my body*: for so it is in a spiritual sense, whilst yet the substance of bread remains unchanged, and therefore most properly is it called bread, which it could in no wise be, if no such substance was there. Yet still we say that by partaking of these holy Elements of bread and wine, we do really partake of Christs body and blood, though in a spiritual manner, according to St. Pauls expression, 1 Cor. 10. 16. Do you judge then who keeps closest to Scripture in this point they or we.

L. *To me it seems plain that the Doctrine and language of our Church is no less agreeable to Scripture than to reason. And I still discover what injury they do us, whilst they charge us with holding, that the Sacrament is only the figure of Christs body.*

T. It is (as I have already said) a most false charge: for though it be the figure of his body, and expressly called so by some ancient Writers, yet we own it to be much more than so. For in this holy Sacrament are given to us Christs body and blood, whilst the blessings and benefits of his Death and Passion are made over to and bestow'd upon the worthy receiver. And so our Church expresses it in the Office at the Communion, *We do spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood: Christ dwelleth in us and we in him: we are one with Christ and he with us.*

L. *Yet they say we make the Sacraments of the New Testament in effect no better than the old, since the Passover and such like were figures of Christ, whereas in the New Testament is to be given the real verity.*

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T. A most plain difference we make, whatever they say to the contrary: for besides that our Sacraments are few and easie, clear and intelligible, it is to be considered, that under the Law were used types and shadows which prefigured Christ to come, and that somewhat obscurely, whereas the Sacraments now used do most plainly shew him to be already come, and to have died for our sins, and risen again according to the Scriptures. Herein moreover is made to us a more plenteous communication of grace and comfort, as the fruit of his Death and Resurrection, according to that of the Evangelist, *The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*, Joh. 1. 17. Yet after all we assert that the Elements made use of in these Sacraments of the New Testament are no more changed, as to their natural substance, than those of the Old: that is, they are still Sacraments, outward visible signs and representations of Spiritual things, and are not changed into those very things themselves which they are designed to represent and hold forth to us. And this is granted by the Papists themselves as to one of the Sacraments, viz. that of Baptism. For the water herein made use of still remains water. It is not turned into the natural blood of Christ; and yet by virtue of that blood, which this water represents, are our sins washt away in this *Laver of Regeneration*. Hence then it is most evident, that the efficacy of a Sacrament consists not in having the natural substance of the Elements altered; for then there would be no virtue in Baptism. And consequently neither doth the excellency of the Sacraments of the New Testament above those of the Old consist in any such alteration: for if it did, then Baptism should not be prefer'd before Circumcision; or any of the washings and sprinklings used under the

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Law,

86 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

Law, since in Baptism water still remains true water. And if this be no disadvantage or dishonour to the holy Sacrament, of Baptism, then no more is it to the other Sacrament that the Bread and Wine used therein do still remain true Bread and Wine as to their natural substance after Consecration.

L. I cannot imagin any reason for the putting a difference in this case betwixt the two Sacraments. And I do a little wonder they should be so careles as to use an argument which if it had any truth or force in it, would plainly tend to the disparaging of the Sacrament of Baptism.

T. You must not expect good arguments in a bad cause: but has your Author no better than these?

L. I find no more arguments on this subject, only he makes use of a similitude, that if a Father should leave to his Son his House and Garden by his last Will, would the Son understand by this the picture of the House and Garden, or the things themselves in truth? In like manner he infers that our Saviour has not left us the bare figures of his Body and Blood, but these very substances in the Sacrament.

T. Rather we may infer that in like manner did our Blessed Saviour truly give up himself for us on the Cross, there shedding his blood for the remission of our sins, and doth in this Holy Sacrament really confer the blessings purchased by his death upon all true believers, and by this means he does most truly give himself to them according to his promise; even much more to their advantage than if he had given them his natural flesh and blood in the Sacrament,

L. I think my Authors Simile does him little service.

T. Service do you say? rather if you consider it well, it will be found to make directly against his own opinion. For suppose your Father had left you an House and Land by his Will, and appointed some body

body after his death to put you in possession of it, by giving you a key, and a turf or twig: when this is done, do you take this key to be the very house, or the turf or twig to be the land? no surely, but only in effect and in the sense of the Law they are so, since by these the house and land are made over to you; and by receiving them you are put in actual possession of them as fully and effectually as if the whole house and all the land had been put into your hands, if that had been possible. And thus, I say, by these Holy Elements doth our Blessed Saviour make over himself and all the blessings of the Covenant to his faithful people.

L. The resemblance is very plain, and helps me still better to understand, how fully the Body and Blood of Christ may be said to be verily and indeed received by the faithful in the Lords Supper, without giving the least countenance to this Doctrine of Transubstantiation.

T. That you may be sure of, these being the very words used in our Church-Catechism; and many the like expressions we find in the Office at the Communion, some of which I mention'd before. Yet all this while it's well known how utterly our Church disowns this absurd opinion, so contrary to sense and reason, and to the express words of Scripture as I have shew'd. Yet give me leave in a few words further to manifest how, without admitting this opinion, we may very properly affirm, That Christ is verily and indeed received by the faithful in this holy Supper, viz.

(1) In a moral sense, as servants receive their Master by taking earnest, and subjects their Prince by taking the Oath of Allegiance. For here we do solemnly profess our selves the disciples, servants and subjects of the blessed Jesus; and by taking these holy symbols of bread and wine, do receive him as our

88 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

Lord and Saviour, to whom we promise and vow all humble obedience, and through whom alone we hope for mercy and salvation,

(2) Here also do we receive those graces of his holy Spirit which transform us into his likeness, so that Christ himself may be said to come into us, to take possession of us, and to dwell in us and we in him, even by faith and love, and by our likeness to him in all humility, purity, charity, and those other graces which make us partakers of a Divine Nature, and may well be stiled *Christ in us the hope of glory*; all which are confirmed and increased by our worthy communicating at this holy Table. So that passing by other things that might be added to this purpose, you may hence see how properly the holy Elements may be called the Body and Blood of Christ, of which they are the Sacrament and Symbol, and which they do really convey to us as much to our advantage, as if they were changed into the very natural substance of what they represent. For suppose we should eat Christs natural flesh, and drink his blood, what are our souls the better for this, if the graces of his Spirit do not accompany them? But if these graces are bestow'd on us by our worthy receiving of the holy Elements of Bread and Wine, what loss is it to us that these remain unchanged as to their substance?

L. *None at all that I can imagin.*

T. You may be sure of it, since what is bodily, reaches only to the body and not to the soul of man. For as our Saviour tells us (*Mat. 15. 11.*) *That what enters into the mouth defiles not a man*, of which he after gives the reason, *because it passeth into the belly and thence into the draught*: So neither can that which enters into the mouth, of it self purifie and cleanse the soul of man, because it's only received into the body,
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and so passes through it. And this is that Doctrine which, I have formerly told you, our Blessed Saviour himself most plainly teaches, *Joh. 6. 63.* when he corrected the gross mistake of the dull *Capernaïtes*.

L. Yet how gross soever it was, the Papists at this day seem to continue in it, as if Christ had promised to give men his natural Flesh to eat.

T. And this they do, contrary to our Saviours own explication of himself in *vers. 63.* and to other places of Scripture before named, and also contrary to all true Reason. We will not set up our own shallow reasonings against the Holy Scripture, but are ready most firmly to believe whatever we find therein plainly revealed. And there we may find some things above our Reason, though nothing contrary to it. But now this Popish Doctrine of Transubstantiation it is both contrary to plain Scripture, and is also full of so many palpable absurdities and contradictions that it were almost endless to name them. Yet the more to confirm you against it, if need be, let me mention a few of those many. As for instance according to this opinion, our Saviours body would be in ten thousand places at one, viz. where ever the Consecrated host (as they call it) is. At *Rome* and at *Paris*, in the *East-Indies*, and the *West*; and in thousands of Churches where it's reserved. And in one place Christs body would rest upon the Altar, in another it might be carrying toward a sick man. It would be in one Priests box, and in anothers hand; in this mans mouth, and in that mans stomach; and all this one and the same body still. Yea thus it must have been ever since the first institution of this Sacrament, above sixteen hundred years ago. Millions of men in the several ages and places of the world would all have eaten this self-same body a thousand times over, and yet still it remains

mains whole and untouched, the very same that it was from the beginning, neither multiplied nor divided, neither encreased nor diminished. Again, by this Doctrine, every wafer and every part of the wafer is the whole body, and a thousand wafers are only that one. Yea, what is more prodigious, (if any thing can be so) according to this opinion, our Blessed Saviour when he was present with his Apostles alive and well, did then give himself into their hands to be eaten by them. So that he was in their mouths and bellies at the same time that he was sitting amongst them, and yet never shewed the least sign, nor felt the least effect of any such change upon him. And yet after all, this same Body was next day offered up, and his Blood poured out on the Cross. It deserves also to be considered how the breaking of Christ's natural Body, and eating and swallowing it, is consistent with its being still alive, as surely they will grant it is. Yea, how this same Body should be at God's right hand shining in honour and glory, and yet at the same time be set upon the Altar, or carried in a Box, yea, eaten by Mice, or by Worms and Flies. But no questions must be asked, no doubts or scruples raised, all must be swallowed with an implicate Faith, and they think to solve all well enough, with crying, nothing is impossible with God; which any Man may as well pretend to justify the grossest falsehoods and absurdities in the World. Though truly I think none can be imagined greater than what this opinion stands justly charged with. That so mighty a change should be made in the very natural substance of the Bread, and yet that there is no manner of appearance of it; but still here is the same colour, taste, smell, and all other accidents or qualities of Bread, after Consecration as before. And notwithstanding all this, we must

must believe that there is no substance of Bread to which these accidents belong, but the substance of Flesh without any accidents at all. What strange prodigious fancies are these? And what a scandal is it to our Religion, what a mighty hindrance to the belief of it, when such an unreasonable opinion shall be proposed as an Article of Faith? And be made of equal necessity to be believed with the great Doctrines of the Trinity and Incarnation, though it has no manner of support from the Holy Scripture, as I have before shewn?

L. *I confess, if a Man thought he could not be a Christian without receiving this Opinion, it would be a strong temptation to Infidelity, and go nigh to make him reject our whole Religion.*

T. Doubtless it would; and I fear it has often produced this effect: *Woe be to them by whom the offence cometh.* Yea, further, it will appear, that on some other accounts, this Doctrine directly tends to promote Infidelity; whilst (as many Learned Writers have observed) it does in a great measure evacuate and overthrow the main proofs of the Truth of Christianity. For one great Argument our Saviour made use of was, the Miracles which he wrought: *The works which I do (saith he) bear witness of me. If you believe not me, believe me for the works sake.* Now to make this Argument of any force, it must be supposed that their Senses did not deceive them, but what they saw and heard was really true. For if our Senses are not to be relied on, in judging of their own proper Objects at a due distance, how could the people tell but that all these Miracles were meer cheats and delusions? But if they had sufficient assurance that they were truly wrought, because they saw them with their own eyes, and thereupon had sufficient ground to believe

lieve that Religion to be true which was confirmed by them; then have we as good reason to believe Transubstantiation to be most false, since our Senses do as fully assure us that it is so. And hence we are very certain that this could be none of the Doctrines which our Saviour taught, because there would have been a direct contradiction betwixt the Doctrine it self, and the Argument made use of to prove it: for whilst he appeals to his Miracles, he supposes that Men may trust their Senses in the discerning of proper Objects, whereas, according to this Doctrine, no trust is to be given to them. Moreover we know that our Saviours Resurrection was the great confirmation of his Doctrine, and did demonstrate him to be the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Now, how should it be known that the same Jesus who was Crucified was indeed risen from the dead, but by their sight of him, and converse with him? Thus we read what full satisfaction it pleased our Saviour to give to *St. Thomas* in this respect, permitting him to put his Fingers into the print of the Nails, and to thrust his hand into his side, and by this means all his doubts were removed. Now the same ground that *St. Thomas* had to believe that the Body which was wounded and hung dead on the Cross was after raised again, the very same have we to believe, that the Bread and Wine in the Sacrament are not turned into the natural substance of Christ's Body and Blood, even the full evidence of our Senses. Whereas if *St. Thomas* and the rest of the Apostles, at the institution of this Holy Sacrament, a little before Christs Death, had found their Senses to be so grossly deceived as Papists would persuade us, I know not how they could well have trusted them so soon after his Resurrection, as we find they did. If then the Apostles had good reason to believe
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the Resurrection of Christ to be true; so have we to rest assured that this Doctrine of Transubstantiation is most false. Yea, let me add, if we are sure that these words, *This is my body*, are in the Gospel, then so sure we may be that they cannot be taken in that gross sense which *Papists* put upon them: for as we know them to be there, because there we *see* them and *read* them; so do we as plainly see, that after Consecration, the Bread and Wine still remain in their natural substances, and therefore are made the Body and Blood of Christ in a spiritual and mystical sense, according to the most common acceptance of such Phrases that relate to Sacraments, as was before shewn.

L. You need add nothing more to clear this matter, nor can I imagine what reply they can make, except they shall say that we must not in this case trust our senses, but exercise of our Faith.

T. This indeed they do say, but with no manner of reason: For though God requires the Exercise of our Faith in Believing what he hath revealed, though our senses cannot reach to, or discern it; yet we never read in the whole Book of Scripture, that ever he requires men to believe any thing directly contrary to the evidence of their Senses; to believe it was dark as midnight, when they saw the Sun shining at Noon-day; to believe the same Man to lye dead in his Grave, whom they saw alive walking before them: For at this rate all our Saviours Miracles had been wrought in vain, if men must not believe their own eyes, as we use to say. For we must consider that Almighty God hath so framed our Nature, that we are to be directed and guided by our Senses in those matters that properly belong to them: Nor can we I think, in this present state, have more clear and full assurance

assurance of any thing than what our Senses, when sound and perfect, convey to us. And therefore, I have said, our Saviour took this way to give assurance of the truth of his Gospel, and of his Resurrection, by that satisfaction he gave to the very Senses of Men. Thus St. John, when he would give the clearest and fullest evidence of the truth of Christian Doctrine, he tells us, *That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which our hands have handled, declare we unto you,* 1 Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3. Now all this may assure us that those words, *This is my body*, are not to be taken in such a sense as would engage us to the belief of Transubstantiation. Nay, the Word of God it self assures us that they are not, since in this Word, as I have shewn from many places, the Holy Bread in the Sacrament is called Bread after Consecration, and therefore are we so to believe it; and are to look upon it as his Body Spiritually and Sacramentally; and so neither one Text contradicts another, nor will our Faith contradict our Senses.

L. This is easie and intelligible, and neither offers violence to the Word of God, nor to the Reason of our own Minds.

T. Yet further, let me add, if the Senses of all Men throughout the whole world are thus deceived, as they must be if Transubstantiation be true, then is all certainty of any thing whatever in a manner utterly destroyed. How can I tell that I tread upon the Earth, that I see the Heavens over my head, or the Sun shining in the Firmament? In these, and all other things which I think that I see or hear, my Senses may be imposed upon, as well as in the present Case. And how then can I be sure that any Revelation was ever made from God to Man? Or how could any Man be sure of it, though a Voice came to him from Heaven,
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or a Vision appeared to him? All this may be but idle fancy and delusion; his Hearing and his Sight are not to be trusted. Yea, let this opinion be admitted, and how can we be certain of the truth of that which God hath in his Word revealed? For if he deceive me one way, why not another? The same Holy and True God who hath revealed his Will in Holy Scriptures, hath also made another sort of Revelation in the works of Nature. He hath given me Senses of Seeing, Hearing, &c. and hath proposed Objects agreeable thereto. Now, if I believe him to be so Holy and Good that he will not deceive me in his Word, why may I not from the same Goodness argue that he will not deceive me in his Works? But if he should do it in the latter, why may he not in the former also?

L. *They may say this is a particular Case, and therefore though our Senses may herein be mistaken, yet we have no reason to suspect them at other times.*

T. A particular Case it is indeed, and such as nothing like it can be instanced in, nor yet any good reason assigned why our Senses may not at any other time be deceived as well as in this matter. But strangest of all it is, that we have no warning given us in Scripture not to trust our Senses in this particular Case, though in all others we may: Nor do we find any thing said to take off the prejudice that might arise in mens minds against so strange a Doctrine. We hear of no Objections made of old against it by the Enemies of Christianity; nor of any Answers given to silence or prevent such Objections. Nay, on the contrary, as I have said, when the *Capernaïtes* mistook our Saviour's meaning, he let them know that his Discourse was to be understood in a spiritual sense, *Joh. 6. 63.* Thus certainly the Apostles understood it, as also those
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Words, *This is my body*, else surely we should have heard of their doubts and objections; at least they would have made some further enquiry about the sense and meaning of them: Else how comes it to pass that we never find the least mention of this same Doctrine in any of the Apostles Sermons, or in the Epistles written to any of the Churches? Nay, though there was so fair an occasion offered to St. Paul, when he discourses about the Lords-Supper, 1 Cor. 11. where he tells them, that *what he had received of the Lord, he delivered to them*; but he is there so far from explaining or asserting the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, that he teaches the direct contrary, in calling it Bread over and over after Consecration.

L. *Yet I have heard some arguing for it from those words of his, that he who eats and drinks unworthily, is guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, Vers. 27. Now, say they, how could this be so hainous a sin, if the natural Body and Blood of Christ were not present in the Sacrament.*

T. For that, let the Apostles own words decide it; for he there tells us, that he who eats this Bread, and drinks this Cup unworthily, is thus guilty. So that it is Bread which is eaten, and (consequently) Wine which is drunk by the Receiver: But to do this unworthily and irreverently, rushing upon it as a common meal, not duly considering the great importance and design of this Holy Sacrament, as it is a commemoration of Christ's death, and a Spiritual Feast upon his Body and Blood, this must needs be an hainous Sin; being an affront to Christ himself, and a profanation of his Sacred Ordinance. This is meant by their *not discerning the Lords body*, vers. 29. And to receive these Holy Elements without reverence, thankfulness, and true devotion, was to be guilty

guilty of dishonouring the Body and Blood of Christ, which were here represented and exhibited to Believers. But all this while we have no reason hence to fancy, that the natural substance of Christ's Body and Blood are present in the Sacrament. Had the Apostle thought of any such thing, surely he would have expressed himself in another manner, and have said somewhat to explain so Mysterious a Doctrine. And had he and his Brethren taught the same as the Church of Rome now does, surely the unbelieving *Jews* or *Gentiles* would have poured forth their Objections against it, whereas we hear not a word of that nature, neither in the Apostles Days, or the next Ages after. In all the Apologies that the first Christian Writers set forth in defence of our Religion, we find nothing said in vindication of any such Opinion as this, whilst they give large Answers to many other Objections, for which there was nothing like so good a pretence. Nor do we read of any controversy amongst Christians themselves about this matter for many Ages; whereas in latter times, since this Opinion was first broached, there have been many Volumes written for, and against it.

L. *But they pretend that this was the Ancient Opinion of the Fathers and first Christians.*

T. Pretend it they do, but as in other points of Controversy betwixt them and us, so here it is a very vain and false pretence: For we read nothing of it in the old Creeds, or the Canons of General Councils, or in the genuine works of any Father for many hundred years after our Saviour.

L. *Yet they alledge that the Fathers commonly stile the Holy Elements the Body and Blood of Christ, and will frequently quote places to that purpose.*

T. No doubt but they may easily do that, though without any advantage to their Cause, since its plain enough in what sense those expressions are to be understood from other places of the same Fathers: For they themselves do sometimes tell us, that Christ's Words of eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood, are to be taken Spiritually; that in the Communion there is a commemoration of his Death, and a representation of his Body and Blood; yea, sometimes they expressly call the Bread and Wine the Figures thereof. Now these and such like sayings cannot possibly be reconciled with the Popish opinion of Transubstantiation. Therefore when they speak of Christ's Body and Blood in the Sacrament, we may most reasonably understand them in the very same sense that I have told you our Church frequently uses the like expressions: So do our Writers very commonly in their Books of devotion, and in practical discourses on the Communion speak at the same rate, whilst they intend nothing more, but that these Holy Elements are made Christ's Body and Blood Mystically and Spiritually. But how far this opinion of Transubstantiation is from being an Ancient Doctrine of the Christian Church, hath been made sufficiently evident (amongst many others) by the Learned Bishop *Cozens*, who in his History of it, gives us an account about what time it was first publickly taught, what opposition was then made to it by sundry Learned men of that Age, and how long it was before it could be established by any Council, even amongst *Papists* themselves, or could obtain to be the general avowed Doctrine of their Church. Nay, to this very day, their chief Writers are strangely divided in the accounts they give of it, setting their Wits upon the rack to explain and defend it; some this way, and
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some that, having so very little help from Holy Scripture in the Case, as some of them are so ingenuous as to acknowledg.

L. Methinks its strange that they should with so much eagerness maintain, and with so much violence impose a Doctrine, which to me seems impossible to be understood, or firmly believed.

T. Strange it is, and very unreasonable, but yet some account may be given of it; for beside that natural pride which inclines men to defend the opinion which they have once espoused (especially a Church which boasts of Infallibility) besides this, I say, we may consider how mightily the admitting of this opinion makes for the Honour of the Priest, who can thus, with four words speaking, work one of the most wonderful Miracles that ever was known in the World; indeed such a one as can neither be seen, felt, nor understood. But the people who can be perswaded to believe it, must needs have a mighty veneration for the Priest that works it; and be almost ready to make a god of him, who can so easily make a god for them, by turning the Bread into the very person of our Saviour, his Divinity and Humanity; whom therefore they worship and adore as God, though after that they eat him.

L. This may seem indeed to make for the Honour of the Priest, that he can work such wonders; but surely it makes little for the honour either of Priest or people to be guilty of such false and absurd opinions, and of such corrupt practices which are the natural consequence of them. For are they not guilty of Idolatry in Worshipping the Bread as God (though I know they say there is no Bread there after Consecration) pray let me know your judgement, because I find my Author endeavouring to vindicate their Church from this heavy censure.

T. I do not see how they can possibly excuse themselves from this charge, if the Bread still remains Bread in its natural substance, as we may most certainly conclude it does, from what hath been alledged both from Scripture, Reason and our Senses. Wherefore whilst they worship that for God which is not God, giving to the creature what is due alone to the Creator, they may justly be reckoned guilty of Idolatry.

L. *But will it not serve to excuse them, that they worship that which they take to be God, and therefore do design and direct their Worship to God, and not to the Bread, which they believe not to be there after Consecration, though they see it before them?*

T. What allowances it may please our good God to make for the ignorance and mistakes of honest, well-meaning men, I still say, it doth not beseem us to determine: But as to the thing it self, for my own part, I cannot see how this pretence will any more excuse a *Papist* from Idolatry, than it would excuse an Heathen for his Worship of the Sun, that he did verily believe the Sun to be God, or that God did in some extraordinary manner dwell in the Sun, the substance of it being turned into God, whilst only the accidents of Light and Heat, and the like, do still remain. Nay, one would think the Heathen in some respect more excusable of the two, since the Sun looks much liker a God, than does a Wafer or bit of Bread.

But 'there is no great need of disputing against them in this Case, since several Writers of their own Church do freely grant, that if this Doctrine of Transubstantiation be not true, then they may justly be charged with as gross Idolatry as ever was practised in the World. And most certainly this Doctrine is
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not true, if any regard may be had to God's Holy Word, to clear Reason, to our own Senses, or to the most Ancient Christian Writers; and what they would have more I cannot tell.

L. *I am perfectly satisfied with your Discourse on this point, and shall therefore proceed to some other particular.*

T. It's high time you should; and I shall take care to be briefer in the rest: only I was willing to insist the longer on this, because they reckon it so weighty and important a Doctrine of their Church; for the denial of which, they look upon us as damnable Hereticks, and when they have had power in their hands, have treated us accordingly, even with all that bloody rage and cruelty, which the Idolatrous Heathens of old used toward the Primitive Christians. Hereby also you may be convinced how utterly unlawful it is to hold Communion with the Church of *Rome*, which is guilty of Idolatry in this her worship of the Host, and imposes the same upon all that joyn with her; and therefore what great Reason there was for the Reformation at the first, and for our refusal to this day, to pollute our Souls by a compliance with such abominations, which for ought I can see, is as utterly unlawful (even though a Man lived in the Dominions of a Popish Prince) as it was for the three Children to fall down and worship the Golden Image at *Nebuchadnezzar's* command. And as chearfully might any good Christian venture upon the fiercest flames in this Cause, as they did in theirs, resting assured, if not of a deliverance, yet of the Crown and Glory of Martyrs, which is a Thousand times better. And, to conclude, when by this instance you are so plainly convinced what a gross and palpable error is expressly taught, and stily maintained by the *Roman* Church (and as a judgment upon them, they seem fallen into it for a

discovery of their fallhood) you may thence easily infer what opinion is to be had of the Infallibility of that Church; and so will be better prepared for the receiving a discovery of any other of their Errors, as it shall happen to be made to you: To which purpose let us now proceed.

CHAP. VIII.

Concerning the Sacrifice of the Mass.

L. **T**HE next point mentioned in my Author, is that of the Mass, which he says little about, but that it is the unbloody Sacrifice which Christ offered at his last Supper, and which he commanded his Apostles to offer for the commemoration of his death.

T. This belongs to what we have just now been so largely discoursing of: Only you are to take notice, that the common Doctrine among them is, that at the Mass, as they call it, or at the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, there is a true Sacrifice offered, which is propitiatory both for the quick, and the dead, (*viz.* such as are in Purgatory) that is, tends to procure the pardon of their Sins, and freedom from punishment. And this they call an unbloody Sacrifice, to distinguish it from that which our Blessed Saviour offered on the Cross, when he shed his Blood for us: Though how it can be unbloody, whilst the natural Substance of Blood is there, according to their principles, is not easie to understand; nor how that can be fitly called a commemoration of his death, which they say is a
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Sacrifice of Christ, who is there corporally present. But in the mean time, this notion of a Sacrifice, if taken strictly and properly, is a meer fiction, not having the least countenance from Holy Scripture, where we read only that Christ offered up himself a Sacrifice for us on the Cross; but not a word of his doing it the night before, when he instituted the Holy Communion, nor of his being dayly offered up by the Priest to make atonement for sins. Nay, we expressly read, *Heb. 9. 26, 27, 28.* that he only *once offered up himself*, and is now *gone to appear in the presence of God for us*, but there's nothing said of his being offered up to God by others. We do indeed freely grant, that in this Holy Sacrament we make a solemn commemoration of that Sacrifice which Christ offered up, and so may be said to represent to the Father what his Son hath suffered on our behalf, that he may graciously incline to bestow on us those Blessings which were so dearly purchased for us. And we do in some sort Feast upon this Sacrifice, by our eating and drinking of these holy Elements. Here also we do make a Sacrifice, or an Oblation of our selves, both Souls and Bodies unto God, as is exprest in our Liturgy, in the Prayer after Receiving; and here, lastly, we do offer up our Thanksgivings and Praises, as also our Silver and Gold in Charity and Almsgivings, which are the Christian Sacrifices still to be used under the Gospel, and with which we read God is well pleased, *Heb. 13. 16.* And in some of these senses are we to understand the Ancients, when they speak of a Sacrifice or Oblation made to God at the Holy Table: Especially if we consider, that the Custom amongst them was, as Learned Men inform us, for the richer sort to bring good store of provision to this Table, which they presented as their Oblation or Christian Sacrifice. And

out of these was taken the Bread and Wine which were Consecrated and made use of in the Holy Communion, and the rest was either spent in their Love-feasts, or went to the Poor, and to the Clergy.

L. *As there seems little reason to stile the Lords-Supper a Sacrifice, save in the sense you have explained it, so there seems yet less why they should call it a Sacrifice for the dead as well as the living.*

T. Indeed there is no Reason at all for it, nor so much as any colour from Scripture: But this depends upon their dream of Purgatory, of which we have already spoken; an Opinion, I told you, very gainful to the Church on many accounts; and particularly this custom of having Masses for the dead, though it yields no profit to the dead themselves, yet it brings in much to the living, I mean to the Priests, who receive great store of Money for these their Masses, which is sometimes left by the deceased person himself, and sometimes given by his Friends on his behalf; this being generally looked upon in their Church, as a work of extraordinary Charity; and you may be sure warmly enough urged by the Priests, and earnestly pleaded for from the very same principle that made the Silver smiths so zealous for *Diana*, even because their Trade and Gain depended upon her honour, *Act. 19. 27.* But whatever there may be of seeming Charity to a dead Friend, or of real profit to the living Priest in this device, most certainly it hath an apparent tendency to the ruine of precious Souls, and is a mighty prejudice to Piety and Holiness of Life, as hath formerly been cited: For if men can once persuade themselves, that after death there may be satisfaction made for the neglects and miscarriages of their Life, what wonder if they are now careless and licentious? And instead of *working out their own salva-*
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tion themselves, with fear and trembling, they will be apt to leave the trouble of that work to their Executors and to the Priests, by their Masses and Prayers to do it for them. But woe be to those miserable Souls who build their hopes on such ruinous foundations; and woe be to those Teachers who betray them to ruine by such delusions, thereby serving their own bellies, rather than the Lord Jesus, and the interest of Religion. But let us be wise now in this our day, to consider the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes. Now by a speedy Repentance and thorow Reformation, let us see to make our peace with God through Jesus Christ, in this day of Grace and Patience; but if we neglect this present season, there remains hereafter no more Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain, fearful looking for of Divine vengeance, which will be the portion of all wilfull neglecters and contemners of Grace and Mercy. But let us go on with your Author.

CHAP. IX.

Of having Prayers in an unknown Tongue.

L. HE next goes about to vindicate their use of the Latine Tongue in the Mass, and the rest of their Service.

T. And pray what can he alledge in vindication of their using this Language, when the people understand it not?

L. Why first he says that the Priestly Garments, and the ceremonies they use may serve to instruct them: for he had before said how useful their ceremonies are for the exciting of devotion; and then for further instruction they must go to Catechisms and Sermons.

T. They

T. They had need to be very ingenious people who can learn from Priests garments and dumb ceremonies what's the meaning of *Latin Prayers*. Nay their multitude of ceremonies are so far from instructing the ignorant people, that rather they need much instruction to know the meaning of them. And instead of exciting devotion, they rather extinguish and suppress it, by amusing their minds, and pleasing their senses with a great deal of pomp and pageantry. Whatever instructions their Priests may give at Catechisms and Sermons, they are not like to make them understand prayers uttered in a strange language.

L. *He further adds that simple ignorant people may easily be mistaken, if these high mysteries were done in the vulgar tongue.*

T. A wise method truly, to keep people in ignorance for fear they should run into mistakes: as if a man should blindfold a Traveller to prevent his missing the way. But one would think they should here rather employ themselves in the Catechisms and Sermons they talk of, to give the people due instruction for the preventing those mistakes they seem so much afraid of. Though by the course they take with them, in this and other instances, it's plain enough they are more afraid of the peoples getting too much knowledge. And no wonder, whilst its a common saying amongst them, that Ignorance is the mother of Devotion; and so truly it is of the devotion, or rather the superstition of the *Romish Church*, whereas the most clear and solid knowledge of the will and word of God is the mother of true Christian piety and devotion. But has your Author no better reasons than these for this absurd practice?

L. *Other reasons he has, whether better or not, do you judge. He says it makes for the union of the Latin Church,*
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that Priests travailing into other Countries may say Mass where ever they come.

T. Very solicitous they appear for the union of the *Latin Church*, that is of their own party, and in the mean time care little what divisions they make in the Christian Church for their own carnal ends. But of mighty consequence is this project for union which your Author mentions. For what need is there I beseech you that a Priest in a foreign Countrey should officiate there where they may have Priests of their own to do it? And can there not be union enough betwixt foreign Churches, and the Priests that belong to them, in their profession of the same faith, and owning the same worship, except they speak the same language, and use the very same words. One would think they should rather consult for an union betwixt Priest and people, that they might joyn together at the same time in the same prayers, but this they regard not. It's enough it seems with them for the people to be spectators only even at publick prayers as well as at the Communion, though they neither understand the one nor partake of the other. For very usual it is with them for the Priests alone to take the Sacrament, whilst the people stand by and look on: a most corrupt custom and meer innovation, contrary to the first institution and design of this holy Ordinance, and to the practice of all antiquity. And as that cannot properly be called a Communion where Priests and people do not communicate together, so neither are those to be stiled common prayers in which they do not joyn in common. Nor has your Author hitherto produced any thing like a reason for this custom of theirs.

L. *And I doubt, you'll think his last argument as weak as any, viz. that the holy Scriptures have been written in*
Latin,

Latin, Greek and Hebrew, these three languages being written upon Christs Cross, they are therefore called Sacred, and its permitted to these three Nations to use them at Mass.

T. I confess I am utterly to seek for the force of this argument, if it be fit to call it so, whilst it argues just nothing to the purpose. The holy Scriptures were written originally in *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and have been translated not only into *Latin* but several other Languages, for the benefit of those of several Nations, who were converted to Christianity, (of which more hereafter) and accordingly they had their worship also celebrated in the same languages which the people understood, as our ancestors in this Kingdom had. And this surely every mans own reason may tell him is most profitable and necessary in order to true devotion, that they may understandingly and affectionately joyn with the Priest in the publick worship and service. This you will find expressly delivered by the Apostle *Paul* himself in 1 *Cor.* 14. 16, &c. where he disapproves the use of strange Tongues in the Church, as not tending to edification, for that he who understood them not could not say *Amen* to the Prayers or Praises uttered in those unknown Tongues. As to those three Languages he mentions being written upon the Cross, and therefore allow'd to be used in publick worship, it is such an idle and insignificant fancy, that I am ashamed to take notice of it. If he had infer'd the quite contrary, that therefore they must not be used, the reason had been every whit as good, that is stark naught. But what will not men devise, when they are put to their shifts?

L. I wonder what makes them so stiff in a practice so contrary to Reason, Scripture, and the usage of the Primitive Church.

T. It

T. It is not very easie to give the reason, since some amongst themselves seem ashamed of it; and many of their Bishops in the Council of *Trent* desired to have publick Prayers in a known Tongue, but it would not be granted. The reason of which (as of many other corruptions being still continued) seems to be partly from their fear, that if they should make one alteration a great many more would follow: (for if they own themselves to have erred in one thing, why not in more?) and partly to encrease the peoples admiration of the Priest and his Prayers: (for the less they understand the more prone they are to admire.) And lastly, perhaps there may be this peculiar reason for it, that hereby the people may more easily be persuaded of the efficacy of the Priests words for the working that prodigious miracle of Transubstantiation. For if they should hear him speak only plain words in their own mother-tongue, they could hardly think them of force enough to work such a mighty change, whereas in hard words there may be some hidden virtue which they are not aware of. But let us go on to what follows.

CHAP. X.

Concerning Confession of sins to the Priest in order to his forgiveness of them.

L. **M**^T Author next pleads for the custom of confessing sins to the Priest, on account of that power which Christ hath given him to absolve and forgive sins, Joh. 20. 23.

T. As

110 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

T. As to this matter of Confession of sins in order to absolution, in brief I would have you consider, that anciently when Church-discipline was strictly observed, they who had been guilty of notorious scandalous crimes, were obliged to make satisfaction to the Church, by a publick penitent confession of them: and when they had given sufficient evidence of their repentance by submitting to such penance as was imposed on them, they were then publickly absolved and received into the communion of the Church, from which they were before cast out. And whilst the Bishop or Priest did herein proceed according to the rules of the Gospel, then what they remitted on earth would be remitted in heaven, &c. according to *Joh. 20. 23.* But by degrees through the corruption of the times, and the general looseness of mens manners, this publick confession was in a great measure laid aside, and instead of it only a private confession to the Priest required, and absolution commonly granted upon very easie terms, and this is that which is now so zealously pleaded for by those of the *Romish* Church. As to the former, our Church highly approves of it as a godly discipline, and sometimes it is at this day practised amongst us. But as to private confessions, there is no absolute necessity of them at all times. For when our sins have been private, such as have given no offence to the Church, or our Neighbours, but only to Almighty God, here it may suffice that we humbly confess them to God himself, speedily forsaking the same, and then shall we be sure to find mercy through our Blessed Saviour: for so God hath promised in his holy word, without requiring us to confess them to men also.

I. But they commonly urge that of *St. Jam. 5. 16.* Confess your faults one to another, &c.

T. This

T. This is indeed very requisite when men have given offence one to another; but here is no mention of a Priest to whom this confession ought to be made. Or suppose that he is here chiefly intended, yet is this confession no further needful than as may give evidence of a sincere repentance, and may serve to procure the Priests prayers and directions, or sometimes absolution. But to this end it's no way necessary for a man at all times to confess all his private faults.

L. *Yes, says my Author, we must confess our sins to the Priest that he may judge of them, and thereupon absolve the penitent. For as Treasons, says he, committed against the Prince are tried by his Officers, so men are to present themselves to the Priest as to a Tribunal, that upon confession they may receive forgiveness, which the Priest grants as Christs Lieutenant or Deputy.*

T. There is no likeness in the case, Princes are but finite creatures, and cannot attend to the trial of all causes in their own persons, and therefore they employ their Officers who are to hear them, and to determine according to Law. But Almighty God is himself present every where, and always ready to receive the humble confessions of a penitent sinner, and upon his sincere repentance will, for Christs sake, receive him to favour; whilst neither Priest nor any mortal man whatsoever may be privy either to his faults or to his confession of them. And yet to keep to his similitude, as men are not bound to present themselves before the Kings Officers for a trial, but when the King by his Law requires it; no more are people bound to make confession to the Priest further than God by his word enjoins it: but he has no where enjoyn'd the confession of all our private faults. And as the Kings Judges are to pronounce sentence according to Law, so must the Priest according to the rules of
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the Gospel, otherwise it is unjust and of no force. This then I grant, that so far as God hath appointed Ministers as his Officers to take notice of the crimes of the people, and to pass sentence upon them, so far the people are bound to apply themselves to their Ministers, to follow their directions, and submit to their sentence, which if it be just, God himself will confirm it. Thus when any man is guilty of notorious crimes, and by no admonitions will be reclaim'd, then may the Minister justly proceed to Excommunicate such an obstinate offender from the society and privileges of the Christian Church; and what he binds on earth shall be bound in heaven; that is, God approves of this sentence, and will ratifie and confirm it, so that if this man continue thus impenitent in his wickedness, God will shut him out from the Kingdom of Heaven hereafter, whom his Ministers have justly cast out of the Church here. But if this scandalous sinner shall come in and acknowledg his offences, and seriously profess his repentance, and give sufficient evidence of the truth of it, then hath the Minister, whether Bishop or Priest, power to absolve him, to release him from the censures of the Church, and receive him again into communion; and may also upon the truth of this his repentance, assure him of and declare to him the remission of his sins from God himself, who hath given to his Ministers power to that purpose. And this their sentence shall also be ratified in Heaven, God through his Son Jesus will be reconciled to this sincere penitent, and if he persevere in well-doing, will at length receive him into glory, who is now admitted into his Church.

L. *All this seems plain and reasonable: but by your discourse I perceive you judg there is no necessity of confessing private sins in order to their being forgiven.*

T. There

T. There is no need of it, since, I say, God nowhere requires it, but hath promised pardon on condition of true repentance, which repentance may be very sincere without any such confession.

L. *But is it not very profitable for people to unburden their consciences to the Minister, that they may receive direction and comfort from him?*

T. Exceeding profitable no doubt it is, and sometimes very needful, especially when they are disturbed with doubts and fears, or assaulted by strong temptations of one sort or other. In such cases we do earnestly exhort them to apply themselves to the Minister as to their Spiritual Physician, with whom they ought freely to consult and to lay open their case to him, so far as is necessary in order to their ease and cure. For by this means he is better able to give them particular directions for the overcoming of those temptations and corruptions which they are most afflicted with. He may also upon the hearing of their case, give them his judgment concerning the state of their souls, which may be of great use to such whose weakness or melancholy may cause them to think much worse of themselves than they deserve. Moreover upon their serious credible profession of repentance, the Minister according to the power he has received from God, may, as I have said, declare and pronounce to them the absolution and remission of their sins; which may yield much ease to the penitent, considering the authority as well as the judgment and faithfulness of the Minister. For which reason in the Exhortation before the Communion, there is advice given to such as cannot by their own private endeavours quiet their consciences, that they would come to their Ministers for assistance. But for those who can well do it, we lay no necessity upon them to
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114 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

make such application; much less do we oblige them to make a particular confession of their faults, since God by his Gospel, as a kind of instrument, pardons the truly penitent, though this pardon be not always pronounced by the Priest to that particular person who seeks for the same.

L. Some argue confession to the Priest to be a duty from the peoples confessing their sins to St. John Baptist, when they came to be baptized of him.

T. This is very little to the purpose, since it was rather a publick than private confession which the people then made, and that in order to their receiving of Baptism from St. John, whereby they were in a solemn manner devoted to newness of life, and therefore very requisite it was that they should now acknowledge and renounce their former evil courses, as we would expect the same from a Turk or Jew before we admit him to Christian Baptism. But doth it thence follow, that all Christian people must confess all the faults they can remember to the Priest, that he may absolve them from the same, before they come to the Communion?

L. Not in the least so far as I can judg: St. Paul only says, Let a man examine himself and so let him eat, &c. not enjoying him to go to confession to a Priest also. But before we leave this, pray will you satisfie me a little further about the Priests absolving of men, or forgiving their sins, which I hear Papists talk much of, and commonly they make use of the Text before mention'd, Joh. 20. 23. and seem to boast of this as a priviledg peculiar to their Priests.

T. Very forward they are to boast of priviledges for which they have no warrant. But as to the present case, that which is granted to the Ministers of Christ, whether from that or any the like Text, seems plainly

plainly to be this, That whilst in their publick preaching, or in Church-censures, or other private application to particular persons, they proceed according to the rules of the Gospel, their sentence shall be ratified and made good in heaven, as I have before in part explained to you, and shall not grudge to do it again. When the Ministers of the Gospel in publishing of it do denounce and threaten eternal misery to Infidels and impenitent sinners, and do promise pardon and salvation to penitent believers, this their sentence shall be confirmed in heaven by Christ himself; for according to this rule will he proceed at the last day. Or when in the exercise of Discipline, they cast out the stubborn offender, whilst he remains such he is also out of the Divine favour: but as upon his profession of repentance the Minister absolves him and receives him into the bosom of the Church, so if he be sincere in this profession, God becomes reconciled to him, and receives him again into favour. Thus also when any man that is burdened in conscience (though he lye not under the censures of the Church) shall apply himself to the Minister, and open his case to him, acquainting him, so far as is needful, with those particular crimes that lye most heavy upon him, and doth profess himself sincerely penitent for the same, the Minister then may (on condition of his sincerity) in the name of God pronounce to him the pardon and forgiveness of them. So that the Ministers power of binding and loosing consists chiefly in this, that he with authority as a Minister of Christ declares and pronounces pardon to some, and threatens wrath to others, as the Gospel directs and warrants him; and accordingly some he shuts out of the Church, some he receives into it, either by Baptism or by absolution from Church-cen-

sins, and whilst Ministers keep to their rule in these cases, what they bind or loose on earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven. And thus they can only forgive sins, by pronouncing forgiveness from God on condition of mens true repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, which condition is commonly exprest and always understood in their granting absolution to the penitent. This much is own'd and daily practis'd in our Church, but to more than this we pretend not. If Popish Priests claim more, let them make good their claim as they are able, by Gods holy word they cannot do it, nor by any solid and good reason. Nay some of their own Writers seem to challenge no more than what I have allow'd; for they say that the Priests under the Gospel pardon sin, as those under the Law cleansed men from Leprosie; and how was that but by pronouncing him to be clean who upon trial was found so, according to the rules in that case laid down in the Laws? But if the Priest mistook in his judgment, this would not make the Leper clean, though it might give him liberty to go into the Congregation: so when an hypocrite is absolved, though this may give him liberty of external communion with the Church, yet will it not be of any value to procure the favour of God, and the forgiveness of his sins. For pray consider what is it to have our sins forgiven, but to be freed from the punishment due to them? Now who is it that can keep off this punishment but God alone, who has power to inflict it? most certainly no mortal man, be he Priest or Pope, or what he will, can save an impenitent sinner from the wrath of God. 'Tis God alone then that properly forgives the penitent, in removing his displeasure from him, and preventing that punishment which was due to him: and Gods Minister s they only pronounce
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absolution and remission to the penitent. Indeed so far as the Church inflicted punishment, so far she may be said to forgive a man by taking off that punishment. So the Criminal that was under Excommunication may be absolved by the Minister from that censure; but 'tis God alone who gives pardon of sin by saving men from that misery which they had deserved; and this pardon his Ministers do in his name pronounce to the penitent, and can assure it only to those who are truly so.

L. I am satisfied with your Discourse, and the rather for that I hereby perceive, that whatever real advantage is to be had by the peoples private application to their Spiritual Guide for direction and comfort, this they may have from the Ministers of our own Church.

T. No doubt but they may, if it be not their own fault: for we do not only allow, but earnestly invite them to come to us for that purpose, and are ready to give them all the assistance we are capable. And according to that power which Christ hath given to his Ministers, to pronounce absolution to those that are penitent, we are ready to do the same both in publick and private, for the satisfaction and comfort of the pious and humble, whose consciences are burdened with the sense of their sins.

L. I was the more willing to have you insist on this, because I have heard some Papists much exclaiming against our Church for not having confession used amongst us, and boasting what great advantage they received from it.

T. Where the Priest is judicious and faithful, and the people truly devout, I doubt not but they may get much benefit by a free opening of their minds to him, and receiving such directions as may be suitable to their particular case. And may true piety be promoted, whether in this place or that, by this or the

other method, for my part I shall rejoyce in it. And perhaps the abuse of private confessions in the Church of *Rome*, may have driven others into the contrary extreme, and made them too much disused amongst us. But in the mean time it's most unreasonable to rack and torture mens consciences, by obliging them to tell every particular fault they can think of; which instead of giving ease, may often occasion more perplexity and disquiet to their minds, on more accounts than one. Besides, whatever they boast, I doubt this practice is generally turned into a meer formality, and by the carelesnes both of Priest and people (though I will not condemn all) tends rather to encourage and harden men in sin than to reform them from it, whilst they conceit they have a pardon so near at hand, and can upon easie terms wipe off their former guilt, and so go on to sin upon a new score. This while I doubt they come to confession for a pardon rather than a cure, and are pleased with it as a fine device to keep them from Hell, though they go on in their sins. Especially considering that current Doctrine of their Church before mention'd, that bare ~~at~~^{tr}ition (that is, being sorry for sin only from fear of Hell) may suffice to procure pardon, if they are but absolved by the Priest. And may not the most wicked man on earth sometimes feel this kind of sorrow, whilst yet he has no real love for God and goodness? Moreover, notwithstanding their great pretences of Religion, and the good of souls, there is, I fear, a great deal of carnal policy in their urging this Auricular confession (as they call it) upon the people with so much strictness, for the Priest by this means knowing so much the secrets of their minds, and their private faults, it gives him more dominion over them, and makes them have more awe and reverence for him. And whilst they

they often discover the secrets of families, of Statesmen and persons of greatest quality, they know how to make their advantage of these discoveries for their own interest, as occasion shall serve. Other abuses also there may be, and I doubt often are, made of this custom by the worser sort of men, such as I am not willing to mention. Rather let us proceed with your Author.

CHAP. XI.

Of Invocation of Saints.

IN the next place he pleads for praying to Saints, which he reckons we may as lawfully do as St. Paul when living desired others to pray for him, as he also did for them: and so he supposes that both Angels and Saints do pray for us in heaven, and therefore we may pray to them to do it for us.

T. By this he would insinuate that our Prayers to them are only to desire them to pray to God for us, which is not so, as we shall shew anon. But for the present, let us suppose this to be all they argue for, that we are to pray to the Saints departed, that they would intercede with God for us. Now for this we have no warrant from the holy Scripture, no such precept either in the Old Testament or the New, nor yet the example of any pious person recorded in either. Nor was it the practice of the Primitive Church for some hundred years after our Saviour, and therefore surely we are very excusable for refusing to comply with so bold an innovation. The argument he makes use of is far from the purpose. For does it follow that

because I may desire any good man now living to pray for me, that therefore I may desire those that are dead and in another world to do it? surely no. Especially if you consider how much danger, at least, there is of Idolatry in this custom of praying to the Saints departed. For these prayers to them are offered up in a solemn manner, when people are upon their knees, and with all the signs of devotion and reverence which they use in the worship of Almighty God, and commonly they are mingled with their prayers to God. What wonder then if ignorant people by this means be drawn to worship Saints with the same devotion that they do God himself? but there's no such danger in my desiring the prayers of some living friend to whom I am speaking or writing. Besides, I know that my Friend hears what I say, and will grant my desire; but I have no manner of assurance that the Saints in Heaven hear or know the requests which I make to them. Nay, we may be sure that they being finite creatures, are not present every where, nor can attend to Thousands of Suppliants in several parts of the World, who may all be making their addresses to them at the same time.

L. But he say's, that they now seeing God, do see us in a clear Looking-glass whatever touches him.

T. This is boldly said, but without the least proof, and therefore needs no confutation. Yea, certainly it is most false, since the Angels who behold the face of God, are yet ignorant of many things which it does not please God to reveal to them. And by the way, this is directly contrary to the general opinion of the Ancients, which was, that the Souls of good men did not attain the blissful sight of God till after the Resurrection, and therefore they made mention of the holiest and best Men in their Prayers, that they

they might have a joyful Resurrection, and that this glorious day might be hastned for their comfort, as we have shewed. Now thus to pray for them, does not seem very consistent with their praying to them at the same time : Nor is there any evidence of such Prayers used amongst them. Only this is generally granted, that some of the Fathers, about Three or Four hundred years after our Saviour's time, in Funeral Orations or Speeches made to the honour of deceased Saints and Martyrs, were wont sometimes, in a Rhetorical manner, to make Apostrophes to the dead, turning their Speech to them, as is common with Orators, even to things inanimate, as to the Heavens, the Earth, or the like. But it does not appear that even these Fathers themselves were fully perswaded that the Souls of their Friends heard these discourses ; nor did they use to make solemn Addresses to them in the same posture, and at the same time that they made their Prayers to God : Much less was it the custom of the Church in those days so to do, though perhaps such forms of speaking, used by eminent Men, might prove some occasion of it in after-times.

▲ L. But he adds that the Angel in Zachary, Chap. 1. pray'd for the people of Israel, and Jeremy the Prophet after he was dead did the same, for which he quotes 2 Mac. 15.

T. There can be little force in arguments drawn from appearances of things to Prophets in visions : and much less from that story of Judas's dream in the 15th. of *Maccab.* it being very uncertain by the relation there given, whether he had such a dream, or whether he did not devise it for the encouragement of the people. But be it true or false, it's of very little consequence, since neither from these or any other places

places doth it appear, after what manner either Angels or Saints do pray for those here on Earth. For though particular Angels have knowledge of those particular Persons and Nations about whom, by God's appointment, they are employ'd; yet is it no way probable, that any one Angel has knowledge of all persons in all places: And much less can we think that any Saint has such a vast and infinite understanding. Nay, we have no assurance that they are acquainted with us and our affairs. The words of the Prophet seem to teach the contrary, *Isa. 63. 16.* But let us take all for granted that he asserts about Angels and Saints praying for those on Earth, yet does this make little for his purpose, since their praying for us, does not depend upon our praying to them so to do; nor shall we have the less benefit from any Prayers they may put up for mankind, because out of Honour to God, we dare put up none to them, if in the meantime we do constantly and devoutly worship Almighty God, with an humble dependance on the intercession of our Blessed Saviour, who, we are sure, *lives for ever to appear in the presence of God for us.*

L. Yes, he says Christ is the principal advocate, but yet he will not take it ill that we do Honour to his Saints for his sake, no more than the King's Son will be displeased with the people, for Honouring those who are his and his Fathers Favourites.

T. Our Lord will not be displeased with us for giving to his Saints that Honour which is due to them, which is, that we honour their memory, bless God for them, and above all, that we follow their good examples; but it must needs be displeasing to him for us to give them any part of that Honour which is due to himself, the only Mediator betwixt God and Man, as we are plainly taught, 1 Tim. 2. 5.

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L. *It's true, they say, there is only one Mediatour of Redemption, but there are more for Intercession, viz. Angels and Saints.*

T. This distinction is purely of their own coining, without any ground from Holy Scripture, and therefore justly to be rejected. Nor yet do they keep true to this, when they talk of Saints meriting, not only for themselves, but for others, which is to make them in some measure Mediators of Redemption. But to our purpose: whatever Prayers either Saints or Angels may put up for us, we have no warrant from God to put up any to them; nor are we allowed to make use of any other Mediator but Jesus Christ alone, by whom our persons and services are recommended to Gods acceptance.

L. *But they commonly plead that we may fitly make use of Angels and Saints to present our Prayers to God, as when we have a Petition to the King, we desire some of his Courtiers to present it for us; and this they say shews more humility.*

T. There may be a shew of humility in the worshipping of Angels, Col. 2., 18, 23. but this does not make it lawful, since there is not in it that true humility which is best exprest by Obedience: For God requires no such thing at our hands, nor hath given us allowance for it. And Obedience is better than Sacrifice, better than such *voluntary humility and Will-worship*. Neither doth the comparison he brings, fit the present Case: For it's a difficult thing for mean men to have access to Princes, and therefore they are glad of the assistance of Courtiers to present their Petitions; but the God whom we serve is most easie of access, always near at hand a present help in trouble, most infinitely merciful and gracious, ready to hear and receive the humble Petitions of the meanest of his

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Servants, who come to him in the name of his Son Jesus, our only Mediator and Advocate, who will effectually intercede for all devout supplicants. And a great dishonour it is to him to joyn other Mediators with him, as if he wanted their assistance. For thus in a Kings Court, if it was made the peculiar privilege of the Son to deliver all Petitions to his Father, he might justly look on it as a neglect, yea, as an affront, for any man to employ some Courtier for that purpose. And in our Case it's very unreasonable, since we are fully assured that our Blessed Saviour knows our wants and desires, and is both able and willing to assist us; but (as I have said) we have no such assurance, that this or that Saint hath any knowledge of us and our affairs or can afford us help and relief.

L. I see no manner of reason why we should make use of any other Mediators beside the Lord Jesus, who alone is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him.

T. But beside all this, however they pretend that they only pray to Saints to pray to God for them, it is most evident that they do make some such Addresses to Saints, especially to the Blessed Virgin, as do import much more, even such as are proper only to be used to Almighty God himself. For instance, they devote themselves to her Service and Honour, resign themselves to her will and pleasure, commend themselves and their affairs to her protection and guidance, make Vows to her in their distress, offer thanks and praise to her for their deliverance, beg her assistance in all difficulties and dangers, particularly at their last hour. All this, with much more to the same purpose, frequently used in their devotions to her, speaks somewhat more surely, than to desire her barely to intercede

cede for them. Yea, those expressions which may be thus interpreted, are yet delivered in such a manner, without any mention of her interceding, that whatever notion the more knowing and learned may have, yet most likely it is, that common people take the words as they sound, and seek assistance from her, as they do from Almighty God and our Saviour. And no wonder, when their supplications are made to her as to the Queen of Heaven, their Lady and Governess, one who hath a mighty power in Heaven and Earth, and is the very mother of Mercy and Pity. What does all this serve for, but to make her a kind of Goddess, one invested with Divine Power and Glory? This is done especially in that they call our Ladies *Psalter*, wherein is applied to her, all, or most of that which is ascribed to God himself in the Book of *Psalms*. Nay, as is yet to be seen in some of their old Missals, they give her still the power of a Mother over her Son in Heaven, and desire her to command him to do this and that by virtue of that her power: which one of their Writers excuses as a kind of Religious dalliance; but others more modest and ingenuous have found fault with these things, and acknowledge they ought to be reformed; yea, they have plainly exprest their fears, that the common people amongst them do worship Saints and Angels in much what the same manner as the Heathens of old did their Dæmons and Heroes, and inferiour Deities, having particular Saints for particular cases and turns, as the Heathens had their several Deities for several places and purposes. Nor is it any wonder if the poor people give that worship to these which is due to God alone, when their Learned men make such nice distinctions betwixt them as are not easie to be understood or remembred; whilst they talk of Worship superi-
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our and inferiour, relative, subordinate and the like. To God they grant belongs the highest sort of Worship, which they call *Latria*: then to Angels and Saints they allow a lower kind, which they call *Dulia*; and to the Blessed Virgin *Mary* somewhat betwixt both, which they call *Hyper-dulia*, which, they say, is but little below what is to be given to God himself. Now, what subtil Doctor of them all can fix the just bounds and terms betwixt these? Or if he could, yet how easie is it for the people to mistake and transgress those bounds, giving perhaps to a common Saint, what is due to the Blessed Virgin? and to her, what belongs to God alone? At best then the people are in great danger of Idolatry, and utterly inexcusable are their Leaders, who betray them into this danger.

L. And yet my Author very severely inveighs against us Protestants, as having no good and sound belief, because we pay not due honour and reverence to the Saints, especially for that we will not pray to the Virgin-Mother, whose authority, he says, doubtless must needs be very great.

T. But in the mean time, what good authority has he for that which he asserts with so much confidence? The Holy Scripture is utterly silent in this matter, and so are the most Ancient Writers in the Christian Church. They speak not one word of her Authority in Heaven, nor of any Worship to be given her by those on Earth. Nay, when this Superstition began first to creep in amongst some silly Women, one of those Writers, about Four hundred years after our Saviour, declaims against it, and utterly disallows it. Judge therefore what a wise and charitable censure this is, that we Protestants have no good belief, because forsooth we do not pray to the Blessed Virgin. What! is our Belief not good, because it is not strong enough to give credit to all the idle, ridiculous stories which

which their fabulous Legends tell of her or any other Saint? This, it's confest, we cannot do, but yet we readily believe all that the Holy Scriptures, or any good and credible Authors relate. And what a malicious slander is it, that we give her no Honour? Since, though we do not worship her as a Goddess, or the Queen of Heaven, and the Mother of Mercy, yet we give her all that honour, which either God's Word requires, or the Ancient Christians gave. According to her own prediction, and the Language of the Angel, we do most justly stile her *Blessed among Women*. Her name is precious and honourable, and her memory sacred amongst us. We bless God for the Graces he bestowed on her, and most gratefully commemorate his Mercy to her, in advancing her to that singular honour of being the Virgin-Mother of the ever-blessed Jesus, the Son of God, and Saviour of Mankind. Yet all this while, according to her own example, *Our souls do magnify the Lord, and our spirit rejoiceth in God our Saviour*. And to do otherwise, to give Divine Honour to any creature, were to correct the *Magnificat* (as we use to speak) yea, directly to contradict it. Nay, may I not add, that such worshippers do offer the highest affront and dishonour to the Blessed Virgin, whilst they imagine she can be well pleased with their Adorations and Prayers, and with such fulsom flatteries and praises as their Devotions to her are commonly stuffed with? As if now in Heaven she had lost all that humility, which when on Earth made her so esteemed of God and Men. Certainly if we can guess any thing of the temper of Saints in Glory, by what they were here in the World, such Worship and Invocation must needs be very displeasing to them, if they have any knowledge of what's done here below. What haste did St. Peter make to rectify *Cornelius's* mistake, when

128 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

when he fell down at his feet? He presently bade him stand up, telling him that he himself was a Man. So *St. Paul* and *St. Barnabas*, when the people took them for gods, and would have worshipped them accordingly, they rent their Clothes for indignation, and utterly forbad them, calling out to them to worship the true and living God; as the Angel also did to *St. John*, saying to him, *I am thy fellow servant, worship God*, Rev. 22. 8, 9. And doubtless they are still as zealously concerned for the honour of God as ever they were, and can take no pleasure in having his Prerogative any way encroacht upon for their sakes. Nor therefore can they be displeased with us for not offering up our prayers or praises to them, out of a just and pious fear of robbing God and Christ of their due, by giving their Glory to another. Displeased, I say, they cannot be, whilst we do herein follow their directions, and imitate their example, in worshipping God alone through Christ the Mediator. For this was their practice when on Earth, and this is still their employment in Heaven; and this we find required in almost a Thousand places in those Holy Books which the Spirit of God enabled them to write for the guidance of his Church in all following Ages. There we find our Blessed Saviour himself teaching us to pray to *Our Father which is in Heaven*, but not a syllable of making any Prayers to his Mother. And would he omit any thing that was needful? So the Apostles direct us to pray to God continually, and in every thing to give him thanks, doing all in the name of Jesus Christ; but not one word said of praying to Angel or Saint upon any account whatever. Nor do they, that I remember, in all their Writings, make the least mention of the Blessed Virgin *Mary* after our Saviours Ascension, except in the first of the *Acts*, where

where it's only said that she was together with the rest of the Disciples. Not one short prayer do we find any where put up to her; no injunction given to any Christian Church, in the Epistles sent to them, concerning their worship and adoration of her, no nor in any Christian Writer for some ages after. Whereas we now find the Popish Books of devotion full of such nauseous stuff. Yet these are the men who cry up Antiquity, and pretend to keep so close to Apostolical tradition, and tell us that their Church holds nothing but what this age took from the last, and that from the other before it, till at length you come to the Apostles themselves; but the present instance, with many others of like nature, sufficiently shews the vanity and falshood of this pretence.

L. *To my apprehension it plainly does, and I am apt to think another instance to that purpose may be given in what my Author next mentions, viz. concerning Images, &c.*

C H A P. XII.

Of the Worship of Images.

T. **P**RAY what says he concerning Images?

L. *He says that the Images and Reliques of Saints are honourable in regard of the Saints to whom they have relation, and in regard of God himself, since he makes use of them for instruments of his miracles. And he brings in his Scholar telling how it vext him to the heart to hear any speak ill of the Images of Christ crucified.*

T. Much rather may it grieve the heart of any good Christian to consider how by the abuse of these

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Images, the great God and our Blessed Saviour are highly dishonoured. Though your Author is so cunning as to say nothing of any pictures of God, yet such there are among them, and of the Sacred Trinity, and this vindicated by some of their ablest Writers, though most directly contrary to Gods express command by *Moses* and the Prophets, as we find *Dent.* 4. 15, 16. *Isa.* 40. 18. The reason of which commands does still remain as forcible as ever, and will do so to the end of the world. Since it then was and ever will be an infinite disparagement and lessening to the glory of Gods incomprehensible Majesty, to go about to make any picture or resemblance of him: insomuch that some of the wiser Heathens have declared against it. As to the Images he mentions, *viz.* of Saints together with their Reliques, it's a fine smooth word he uses when he says they are honourable: if by this he meant no more than such an honour or respect as we use in civility to give to the picture of a friend, or to somewhat he has left us in remembrance, we should comply with him, supposing these to be truly the Pictures and Reliques of those Saints whose names they bear, yea whether true or false we should not much dispute it. But it's plain by the arguments they use, and by the practice of their Church, that it is a Religious, and not meerly a civil honour, which they plead for and give to Images, even such an honour as God himself in his Holy Word hath expressly forbid.

L. *It seems so indeed: for though he makes use of the comparison which you have now mention'd, yet his other arguments do aim at much more. For he urges the example of Moses putting off his shoes when God appear'd to him, because the ground was holy, Exod. 3. And he quotes the words of the Psalmist (as he renders them) That they should*

should worship the Ark, *which is called Gods footstool, Psal. 99. 5.*

T. This plainly shews what that honour is which they would have done to Images, and it shews also that their cause is very weak and bad, which has no better arguments to support it. What, because *Moses* at Gods command put off his shoos in that place which was made holy for the time by Gods glorious appearance there, must we therefore against Gods exprefs command bow down to Images, in which there is no holiness, nor any evidence of the Divine presence? Or are they of the old Heathenish opinion, that by consecration of an Image there is some Divine virtue convey'd to it, that the Deity takes up his residence there, and does thence bestow favours upon his worshippers. This one would think by their practice, as I shall after shew. As to the *Psalmists* words they command us not to *worship the Ark* (as he fallily reads it) but *at or before the Ark: Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool*, that is, worship God at or before the Ark, where in a more peculiar manner he manifested himself. And dare they ascribe this to their Images? So *v. 9.* of that Psalm, *Worship at his holy hill*; and so are these places rendred by some Commentators of their own Church. You see then what they plead for, viz. a worship of the Images themselves with Religious worship: for this it is that the arguments they make use of tend to if they are of any force. But the practice of their Church is the best interpreter of their judgment, and shews what they mean by that due honour, which (according to the Council of *Trent*) is to be given to Images. Now their common custom is (according to the account generally given, and which I find not any of themselves to deny) their custom, I say, is with great solemnity

to consecrate their Images, to set them up in their Churches, to deck and adorn them with all manner of pomp and bravery; they set up Wax lights, and burn Incense before them; yea with all outward appearance of devotion they bow to them, kneel down before them, and fasten their eyes upon them when they offer up their prayers. Sometimes they carry them about in publick Processions; and many take pains to go long Pilgrimages to them, some to this Saint, some to that: and more especially to the Images of the Blessed Virgin in divers places, as to the Lady of *Loretto* in *Italy*, and here of old in *England* to the Lady of *Walsingham*, and the Lady of *Wilsden*, that is to her Image set up in such and such places. Hither they came oft for Cures and for help in their distresses, and here they presented their offerings. Which seems plainly to shew that at least the common people were of opinion that some Divine power resided in these Images, and a greater measure of it in some than in others, whilst some were much more frequented than others, and ten times more stories told of wondrous miracles wrought by them in one place than another.

L. My Author talks of Gods using them as instruments for the working of miracles.

T. Whatever he or others may talk, I do not in the least question but that the stories they tell of that nature are meer forgeries, or else the delusions of evil spirits, who cannot but take great delight in Image-worship, and may be justly permitted by lying wonders to abuse and harden those that are given up to such impiety according to *2 Thes. 2. 9, 10, &c.* Or lastly, they are often the cheats of cunning covetous Priests, who easily impose upon a superstitious credulous people. Many impostures of this nature have been discovered, yea and bewail'd by the more wise and

and honest among themselves. Thus they sometimes make their Images sweat and bleed, and squeak and weep, with many other tricks of Legerdemain, which one or other commonly finds out and so spoils all their game. So some travellers have observed that there is seldom a Priest so cunning at these devices, but there is a *Jew* or some such disaffected person, who is as cunning to discover and lay open the cheat, to the infinite scandal of our profession, hardning those that are already Infidels, and inclining others to become so, whilst these notorious impostures make them ready to call in question the real miracles wrought by our Blessed Saviour and his followers.

L. This is indeed a great dishonour to our Religion : but they commonly urge the miracles done of old as an argument for the truth of those now pretended to be done amongst them ; especially they tell of miracles wrought at the Tombs of Saints and Martyrs in former times, and the same they say are still done by their Reliques which they have in keeping.

T. This we shall be drawn to believe, when we can see them done above-board in the open day, where it shall be free for all people to behold and examine the same : but till then, I say, we shall look upon their fine stories as meer cheats or forgeries. And among all the pious , or rather impious frauds used in their Church, there are scarce any more gross or more common than in the matter of Reliques. For instance, at this day they pretend to shew some of the wood of the Cross on which our Saviour suffered, which some of their famous Authors define ought to be worshipped with the highest sort of Divine worship, because it touch'd Christs body. And such quantities of this wood they have heretofore pretended to show in several places, that were they all put together, it's thought

they would make a burden (to speak modestly) by much too heavy for any one man to bear. They are also said to retain some of the Blessed Virgins milk; though by what art it's preserved you must not enquire. Yea some of the tail of the Ass on which our Saviour rode to *Jerusalem*, with a world more of such ridiculous fopperies, that he must be even as stupid and dull as that very brute who can believe the same. Several of their Churches lay claim to the body of the same Saint, each endeavouring to render themselves more famous than others, by pretending to more honourable Reliques, and bragging of greater wonders wrought by them, the better to draw on customers for the encrease of their gain. Yet sometimes after all these pretences it hath been discovered, that the bones of a Malefactor have been made use of instead of a Saint or Martyr.

L. But have there not been true miracles anciently wrought at the Martyrs Tombs?

T. No doubt but there have: for in those days God might please to do it for the conviction of Pagans, and for the confirmation of that faith which his holy Martyrs had sealed with their blood. Yet even then neither these Saints nor their Reliques were to have Religious worship given them, but God alone was to be praised and honoured for them. When the dead man was raised by the touching of *Elisha's* bones, *2 King. 13.* to the God of *Elisha* was the praise only due, but neither the Prophet himself nor his bones were to be worshipped. And should any Jew have done it, he would have been look'd upon as guilty of Idolatry, though he had continued to worship the true God, and had pretended that this his worship of the Prophet, or his Image, or his Bones, had been intended for the honour of God, This would no doubt have

have been look'd on as ill as the peoples Idolizing the Brazen Image of the Serpent which *Hezekiah* therefore broke in pieces. He did not think it for Gods honour to have such an evil practice allow'd : for God is best honoured by ways of his own appointment, not those of our devising, contrary to his commands *Obedience is better than sacrifice*; obedience to the true God is certainly better than sacrifice to an Idol, or bowing down to an Image which is one sort of Idolatry.

L. *But my Author thinks it a most unjust thing to charge them with Idolatry, whilst they do not make Gods of their Saints or their Images, but do own and worship the true God, not setting up Idols in opposition to him.*

T. I know they use a world of art in this matter, and 1000 nice distinctions, subtle evasions, and smooth pretences they have at hand; but after all, if that worship of Images which is forbidden in the second Commandment be properly stiled Idolatry, then in this respect doth their Church appear notoriously guilty of it.

L. *But do they not use to say that the second Commandment forbids the having of Idols, that is of Idol-gods, but not the worship of Images in honour of the true God?*

T. At this rate they commonly talk, but without any solid reason, since the first Commandment forbids our having any false Gods or Idols; but then the second Commandment most plainly forbids the making of Images for Religious worship, yea though men should pretend that they thereby design to worship the true and living God; for he is by no means pleased with such worship, nor will accept of it, but regards it as an affront and dishonour done to his Divine Majesty. So that we may boldly say, Had any few of old been found guilty of giving so much Religious worship to Images as the Papists generally do at this day, though he should have made the very same pre-

136 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

tences and excuses which they do, yet would he have been judged guilty of that Idolatry which is forbidden in the second Commandment, and accordingly would have been proceeded against by such Godly Rulers as were zealous for the true honour of God, and the purity of his worship, such as *Hezekiah* and others. And to enlarge a little on this subject, this, as many learned men have shewn, was plainly the case of the *Israelites* in their worship of the Golden Calf, which *Aaron* made in *Moses's* absence, *Exod.* 32. 4. For it's very unreasonable to think that they took this Image it self for the God which brought them out of *Egypt*, but rather they made it for a representation of him, having probably learnt from the Idolatrous *Egyptians* to make Images of this fashion for Divine worship; yea *v.* 5. it's expressly said they proclaim'd a Feast to the Lord, designing therefore to worship the true God by this Image. And of this nature was the Idolatry of *Jeroboam* who made *Israel* to sin, of which we read *1 King.* 12. 28. for we find him not accused of drawing away the people from the worship of the true God, but he set up the worship of Images contrary to Gods express command. Now this was a different thing from the worship of Idol gods, as of *Baal* and other Heathen Deities, which we find some of the Kings of *Israel* accused of, as *Ahab* particularly, *1 King.* 16. 30, 31, &c. where it's said of him, *That as if it had been a light thing to walk in the sins of Jeroboam, he also went and served Baal, and worshipped him.* Where you have plainly a distinction made betwixt the sin of *Jeroboam* and this of *Ahab* in serving *Baal*. So we shall after find of *Jehu*, who was employ'd to punish *Ahab's* house for this gross Idolatry, and was himself so zealous against it that he slew a multitude of *Baal's* Priests, broke down the Image and the house of *Baal*,
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and thereupon is said to destroy *Baal* out of *Israel*; yet was he notwithstanding all this guilty of continuing in *Jeroboam's* sin, and went after the Golden Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, as we read 2 *King.* 10. 28, 29. Now can it with any shew of reason be imagined that he should worship these Calves as Idol-gods, in opposition to the true God, who had himself at Gods command been so industrious for the rooting out that sort of Idolatry? No surely, but his crime was that he kept up an unlawful way of worshipping the true God by these Golden Calves which *Jeroboam* had set up, contrary to the second Commandment, which plainly forbids the giving of any Divine worship to Images. And they who were guilty of this Image-worship were also accounted and called Idolaters, as we find it asserted of the people that worshipped the Golden Calf which *Aaron* made, 1 *Cor.* 10. 7. *Neither be ye Idolaters as were some of them, as it is written, The people eat and drank and rose up to play,* which you find said of them at their Idolatrous Festival, *Exod.* 32. 6. And their case seems the very same who were followers of *Jeroboam*. So that it's possible for men to be guilty of some sort of Idolatry, even whilst they retain the worship of the true God, and do not set up Idol-gods in opposition to him, even by corrupting his worship with the use of Images which he has strictly forbidden. Thus it sometimes was with the *Jews* of old, and thus it seems to be at this day with the Papists. And as such Image-worship was accounted Idolatry by the Prophets and holy men of old, so it was by the Apostles and Primitive Christians, who utterly abhor'd the use of Images in the worship of God. Yea to such miserable shifts are Learned men of the Church of *Rome* put for the vindicating of this practice, that they are greatly divided amongst themselves, and take several

several ways to do it, each party charging the other with Idolatry in the way they take; for some of them say that the Image is to be worship'd with the very same worship which is due to the object that it represents, whether it be *Latria, Dulia, &c.* (according to the trifling distinction before mentioned) for say they, the Image and the object represented by it are as it were joyned together, so that one and the same act of worship is given to both, which passes through the Image to the object; whereas to give any worship to the Image it self (say these men) would be Idolatry. But others say there is an inferior sort of worship due to the Image it self on account of the relation it hath to the object which it represents, and this only may be given to it; but to give the same worship to the Image which belongs to the object they say is Idolatrous. But I should soon puzzle and tire both you and my self, should I go about to present you with all the fine and subtle distinctions, which both parties use for their own vindication in this controversie; talking of worship proper and improper, direct and reductive, real and relative, by it self and by accident, &c. each accusing the other that they coin distinctions which themselves do not well understand, and surely the same may justly be said of them all. Much more may it be said of the common people, who are this while in a very sad condition, even in most evident danger of Idolatry, and that in the judgment of these their own Learned men, who are themselves intangled in such labyrinths and perplexities as they know not how to deliver themselves from.

L. Methinks it were much more safe and prudent for them all to follow the plain direction of Gods holy word, not to worship or bow down to Images upon any pretence whatever.

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T. This indeed is a safe course, and the only way they can take to secure themselves and their people from falling into Idolatry, through ignorance or mistake, of which at least there is great danger by their own confession on all sides. But so far are they from this, that they endeavour to keep this second Commandment as much as they well can from the peoples knowledge, both by their false glosses upon it, and by leaving most, if not all, of it out of many of their Books of devotion, written in any vulgar Tongue; I suppose, lest the Consciences of the people should take check when they see practices so directly contrary to the Divine Precept. For the great business of these their Guides seems to be not so much to lead them into Truth, as to make them follow with ease where-ever they lead them.

L. *'Tis a wonder why they should thus hazard themselves and the people, whilst there appears no plausible pretence for it, either from Reason or Scripture; nor can I see any advantage they can hope for equal to the hazard they run.*

T. Some pretences they have, though very slender ones, viz. That their Images make for the honour of Christ and the Saints, for the instruction of common people, and the raising of their affections, Pictures being stiled Lay-mens Books. But on the contrary, the great God is hereby dishonoured, and his Commands disobey'd, and consequently our Blessed Saviour is displeas'd, and the Saints themselves disgraced and affronted by such perverse ways of doing them honour: And whilst the people have their senses perhaps gratified, and their fancies pleas'd with the beholding and worshipping of rich and beautiful Images, their minds this while are corrupted and debas'd, true spiritual devotion is in a manner extinguish'd,
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their Consciences are defiled, and their Souls endangered by such Idolatrous practices.

L. How great is their crime then, who draw them in to these snares?

T. Great it is indeed beyond expression. God grant they themselves may in time consider of it, how they shall ever be able to answer it, when the Blood of Souls shall be required at their hands by him who died to save them. And besides the mischief done to those within the Church, how many thousands by this practice of theirs are kept out of it? For both *Turks* and *Jews* look upon those Christians as Idolaters, who are guilty of this Image-worship, and on that account are prejudiced against Christianity it self. Thus do they harden these men in their infidelity, whilst they defile themselves and those in their Communion with Idolatry.

L. Yet after all, the Papists take it very hainously to be accused of Idolatry; and some amongst our selves think this to be too heavy a charge.

T. Let them take it as they will, and let others mince the matter as they please, most certainly they are guilty of violating the Second Commandment; and this violation of it by worshipping of Images, hath, as I have said, been heretofore accounted and called Idolatry both by the Ancient *Jews* and by the Primitive Christians, who utterly detested the same. And if now a softer name must be devised for it, let any man call it as he pleases; still it must be looked upon as a gross impiety and a notorious breach of God's Holy Law, which is enough to work an abhorrence of it in the minds of all good Christians. But I'll enlarge no further on this subject; rather I shall refer you to the elaborate Discourses of that incomparable person Dr. *Stillingsfleet*, Dean of St. Pauls, where

where you will find it handled to your full satisfaction. Or in the mean time, I would recommend to you the Homilies of our Church concerning the peril of Idolatry, where you will find this Churches opinion of Image-worship, viz. that it is downright Idolatry; and there you may learn how far the Ancient Christians, in the first and purest Ages of the Church, were from this corrupt practice; how it was ordained by an ancient Council, that nothing painted on the Walls should be worshipped; and how one of the Fathers in great displeasure tore a Veil in a Church in which he found a Picture, fearing it might be an occasion of worshipping it, and wrote earnestly to the Bishop of the place about it. There also you have a large account of the rise of this practice, in the more corrupt and declining times, about Six or Seven hundred years after our Saviour, and what opposition was then made to it by the better sort of Christians; by what weak Arguments it was defended, by what ill arts in some places established, what bad effects it produced, and how by degrees the people were sunk into all that gross Superstition and Idolatry which had overspread the *Roman* Church, and particularly this Kingdom at the time of the Reformation. This, with much more to the same purpose, you will there find discovered, and will see what great reason there was for reforming the Church from this, as well as many other corruptions and abuses wherewith we were overrun.

L. I shall gladly peruse these Homilies when I have opportunity; being already very sensible that the worship of Images is a most dangerous and unlawful Custom, a meer innovation in the Church, and a plain breach of the Second Commandment, and therefore well deserves to be branded with the infamous name of Idolatry, from which God preserve me.

T. So

T. So it has been reckoned, and commonly stiled by our Church, and by those of our Divines who were most instrumental in the Reforming it, and have been most eminent for the defence of it. Good Reason you have therefore stedfastly to resolve against it. But let us now proceed to what remains.

CHAP. XIII.

Of Praying by Beads.

L. *THE next thing my Author attempts to vindicate, is their praying by Beads, which serve to number their Pater Nosters and Ave-Maries; of which, as I perceive by him, Sixty three Ave-Maries and Seven Pater-nosters, and one Creed, make a Bead-roll.*

T. Very like, and this number, as I take it, they call our Ladies Crown; and an Hundred and Fifty Ave Maries, and Fifteen Pater-nosters makes a Rosary, of which there is a kind of Order in their Church, called the Confraternity of the Rosary. Into this Society all manner of people may be admitted, and these (as I find in one of their Authors who gives an account of it) are obliged to say over the whole Rosary once in a week at least. And these Prayers are to be offered up in a certain manner to Almighty God in honour of the Blessed Virgin. Now, lest this should be too burdensome, there is provision made, that if they have any lawful impediment, they may get another to say their Prayers for them, and it shall be accepted. They who enter into this Society, must solemnly devote themselves to the Honour, Love and Ser-

Service of the Blessed Virgin: Even as solemnly as a Man can consecrate himself to the Service of Almighty God our Heavenly Father, do they give up themselves to her as the Mother of all Christians: For so they say she is to be esteemed, because our Saviour said of her to St. John, *Behold, thy Mother.* To each of these Votaries is given by the Father who admits him a set of Beads, which are Blest, and Crost, and Sprinkled with Holy-Water. And most wonderful Priviledges are bestowed by sundry Popes upon those who devoutly recite this Rosary. They may gain a Plenary Indulgence for themselves, and may every day release a Soul out of Purgatory, which surely they are very uncharitable if they will not do. Nay, which seems strangest of all, even those in Purgatory may be admitted into this fraternity, if any particular Friend of theirs on Earth shall desire it; and will perform on their behalf what is required, and so may they share in the merits of the whole Society. Though by the way, I wonder that any body should leave a particular Friend in Purgatory, when he may so easily deliver him thence, as you heard before. But I'll entertain you no longer with this fulsom ridiculous stuff. Let us return to your Author, and see what he says for this manner of Praying, which a Parrot may go near to learn, and use it with as much devotion as multitudes of them.

L. *He says that the Ave-Mary is used Sixty three times, because the Blessed Virgin Mary lived just so many years.*

T. A wise Reason truly! But I wonder where he had so good intelligence. Some of her Worshippers it's like have heard it from her own mouth: For heretofore nothing more common than for her to appear to them, and talk familiarly with them, if we may be-

believe their own Legends, which I confess is somewhat hard to do. Yet I grant there is as much certainty in the story of her Age, as strength in the Argument taken from it, that is just none at all. Why do they not by this Reason say the Lords-Prayer Thirty three times because our Saviour lived so many years? And it might also be asked, why but one Lords-Prayer for nine Ave-Maries? But waving these things, let us hear his pretence for this odd way of Praying, by running over the same words so many times together, as if they would make up with the number what they want in weight and devotion; and then telling them by their Beads, as if they were afraid of being someway cheated if they did not keep so exact a reckoning. Certainly we have neither precept nor example in Scripture to recommend such a way of worship.

L. All that he says is, that David said his Prayers Seven times a day, and our Saviour in the Garden repeated three times the same Prayer. He demands therefore, whether it be ill to say ones Prayers by number when he has reason so to do?

T. No surely: But when a Man has no reason so to do, it's very vain and absurd. And by all that he alleges, it seems they have no reason, else sure he would have given some. For, I beseech you, where's the consequence, that because David prayed Seven times in a day (that is very often) therefore it's a good thing to repeat one and the same Prayer Seventy times seven in a day, or at least as often as we well can? Or when our Saviour in his Agony doth with great fervour and affection offer up his Petition to his Father thrice in the same words, which were suitable to his present state, is this any thing like the Papists way of running over an Ave-Mary, Ten, Twenty, Thirty times together, with a Pater-noster now and then intermixed
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for variety sake, and this very oft in the midst of company, without the least shew of devotion, and as I take it, in the Latine Tongue, which few of them understand? And which is prettiest of all, when they are busie themselves, though it be but at sports and pastimes, they may then get some idle body patter over these their Prayers for them. And I have heard it often reported by those who have conversed much with them, that sometimes two of these devout people will play a game at Cards which shall say Prayers for the other at such a time. So that it seems they take them for a kind of penance, being glad when they are over, as a School-boy when he has done his Task. And is this like the Devotion of the Holy Psalmist, who prayed to God, and praised him with all his Heart and Soul, and sang praises with understanding, and with great affection and delight? Or much less is this like to that of our Blessed Saviour, who *in the days of his flesh offered up Prayers and Supplications with strong cries and tears*, as we have it, *Heb. 5. 7.* He continued, indeed, sometimes whole nights in Prayer; and his holy Apostles were very constant and frequent in this duty, and have enjoined us to *pray continually, and in every thing to give thanks.* But do you find them any where directing us to say over the same words so often in an hour or a day? and to make use of a sett of Beads to keep true reckoning? Is this a Worshipping of God in Spirit and in Truth? Is this like the fervent Prayer of the Righteous, which St. James tells us is so effectual? Is this like the Intercession of Abraham or Moses, the Wrestlings of Jacob, the earnest Prayer of Elias and other holy men recorded in Scripture? Nay, so far is it from being agreeable to such examples, that it seems plainly contrary to our Saviours command, *Not to use vain repetitions in*

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praying,

146 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*

praying, as if we thought to be heard for our much speaking, Matt. 6. 7.

L. So it seems truly; and nothing can be more weak and impertinent than what my Author talks of, saying Five Pater-nosters in honour of our Saviours Five wounds, he means, I suppose, those in his hands and feet, and that on his side: But what he means by our saying the Lords-Prayer in honour to those wounds I cannot well tell.

T. Nor can I resolve you: He might as well talk of saying it Twelve times in honour of the Twelve Apostles; and then Seventy times for the Seventy Disciples: and after that, as oft as you please in honour of what you have a mind to. For they forsooth have a certain peculiar manner of offering up their Prayers to God in honour to other persons and things, which I confess I am utterly ignorant of; nor do I think they themselves can give a rational account of it. Of such blind devotions as these well may Ignorance be accounted the Mother.

L. But my Author is by no means pleased that this way of praying by Beads should be thought fit only for ideots that cannot read: For he says that Kings and their Cowts, the Pope and his Cardinals make use of Beads, who can read better than Sectaries.

T. There may be some question of that for all his confidence, since it's commonly said that the present Pope (though much commended for some other good qualities) can scarce read their Latine Service. But let them be able to read never so well, that will hardly prove all good which they do. And if we speak of examples, I must confess I had much rather follow our Saviour and his Apostles than the Pope and his Cardinals.

L. And so had I too: But he says they have Books of Devotion as well as Beads; that both are good, and variety delighteth.

T. They

T. They had need truly to have some variety to refresh them: For sure they can neither have much delight, nor much profit from a tedious repetition of the same words over and over at the same time, especially whilst some of them understand not what they say, and do also say some such things as would not much help their Devotion though they were understood.

L. *He says there can be no better Prayers than the Pater-noster, the Ave, and the Creed.*

T. As to the Ave and the Creed, they are no Prayers at all: the former being the Angels Salutation to the Blessed Virgin, *Luke* 1. 28. and it is an absurd piece of superstition to turn it into a Prayer, such as never any Christian was guilty of for many hundred years after that Salutation was first uttered. The Creed contains a confession of our Faith, and though the frequent repetition of it, with serious reflections upon it, may be of great use, viz. for the engaging of us to live according to our profession; yet is it by no means a Prayer, nor any thing like one. The Pater-noster, or the Lords-Prayer, is indeed a most admirable form of Prayer, which may not only serve as a pattern to direct us how to pray, but is also most proper and fit to be frequently used as a Prayer, and may very well be joyn'd with any other Prayers which we make to Almighty God. But yet we must not think there is any devotion exprest, or any advantage got, by repeating it over so many times in an hour, or a day, as if there were some secret virtue and force in the bare rehearsal of the words, whilst we little or nothing attend to the sense of them; which is fitter for Mag-pies and Parrots than for reasonable creature, from whom God expects a reasonable Service, wherein their Hearts and Souls are

148 *Of Points wherein we and Papists differ,*
to be employed as well as their Tongues. But let
us proceed.

CHAP. XIV.

Of Distinction of Meats.

L. M^Y Author next pleads for that distinction of Meats which is used in their Church, there being some Meats which, he says, they forbid, not at all times, as those in 1 Tim. 4. 3. but for certain days, to chastise the flesh, and render it obedient to the spirit: And so the Apostles themselves, he adds, did for some time forbid the eating of blood and strangled Beasts.

T. This prohibition of the Apostles makes nothing for his purpose, since they are generally supposed to forbid the eating of blood and things strangled, to avoid that offence which it would have given to the Jews, which was a sufficient reason whilst it lasted: But now in the Church of Rome, they do, without any reason at all that I can tell of, severely forbid some sorts of Meat in Lent and at some other times, when yet they allow other Meats every whit as pleasant, as costly and luxurious. And whether this be that which is condemned by the Apostle in that place to Timothy or not, yet it is a very unreasonable imposition, and tends to ensnare mens Consciences, and make them fancy there is some Religion in using this sort of food rather than that. Yet mistake me not, what really tends to piety and mortification, we do not in the least condemn; no, we commend and require it: But the distinction of Meats made in the Church of Rome seems not to have any such tendency. For
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with them a Man that shall eat plenty of Salmon, Sturgeon, or other such delicious Fish, and drink rich Wines, breaks not his Lent: (though it's like the stricter sort take not this liberty) but if he chance to eat a little of any course sort of Flesh, or but the Broth it's boil'd in, or any sort of Milk-meats, he is a transgressor. As if there were not a *flesh of Fish, as well as of Birds and Beasts*; or as if there were any virtue in abstaining from one sort rather than another. When we keep a true Fast, we are that while to abstain from all sorts of Meat, if we are able. In a time of abstinence, it beseems us to eat more sparingly, and to use such a sort of diet as is most cheap and plain, and tends least to please the Palate, or pamper the Flesh, that so we may be in a better temper for Religious Duties, and may have more time for our Devotion, more Money for the Poor, and may both humble our Souls, and afflict and tame our Bodies, and govern our Appetites. For all this there is good reason, such fasting and abstinence administers to Religion. But then, whether in your times of abstinence you eat a little Flesh or a little Fish; whether with your Fish you eat Butter or Oil, whether you drink Milk or Small-Beer, and the like, seems not of the least consequence on any Religious account. You are neither better nor worse for one or the other. Here you may well say, *Meat commends us not to God; That which enters into the mouth defiles not the man.*

L. But to this he replies, that the forbidden fruit which our first Parents tasted, though not evil in it self, yet the eating of it was displeasing to God.

T. And good reason, since God himself had given an expresse command to the contrary.

L. And he urges, that so God hath commanded us to obey our Superiors, and therefore to eat what they forbid, is

evil, as it is for Children to taste Sugar or Honey contrary to their Parents commands; this, he says, is the wicked will, which coming from the heart defiles the Man.

T. But all this does not in the least concern us, since, thanks be to God, our Church lays no such burdensome and unprofitable commands upon us, however the Pope and his Clergy, like the Pharisees of old, may load the poor people that are under their yoke. Neither yet does anything he alledges vindicate their Church in making such idle and useless Laws as these, which have no manner of tendency to Religion, or the good of Souls. For what is it to my Souls health, I beseech you, whether I eat a piece of Salmon or the Leg of a Chicken? Whether I take Oil or Butter for my Sawce? Of what moment is this, any more than whether I drink White-wine or Claret, Beer or Ale? In these things every Man is concerned chiefly to look to his own health, and Masters of Families may take order for those under their charge, and Children ought in such things to be ruled by their Parents, since it properly belongs to Parents herein to give orders. Magistrates also, upon a Civil account, may enact such Laws hereabouts as make for the publick good. But for the Church, or any Churchmen to make Laws about these matters, is to arrogate to themselves a power which it does not appear that ever Christ gave them; for it no way tends to edification, but rather to entangle and perplex mens Consciences, and to beget fond conceits that one sort of Meat is more holy than another, which is a meer piece of Judaism, and contrary to the Apostles assertion, *Rom. 14. 17.* These are such silly trifling injunctions as those of the Pharisees about washing their hands before Dinner and the like, and may as justly be rejected without any thing of a wicked will, or any

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contempt of that Authority which God hath set over us.

L. But does not our own Church lay the same commands upon its members, viz. that they abstain from all sorts of Flesh in Lent and at some other times?

T. No where that I can tell of. Our Church indeed appoints times of fasting and abstinence for such good ends as I have before mention'd, and these times are to be observed in such manner, with respect to our diet, as that these ends may best be obtained; but neither in any Rubrick, Canon or Homily that ever I met with, does our Church place any Religion in the bare distinction of Meats, as to the kind of them; I mean in abstaining from Flesh of Beasts or Birds rather than from the Flesh of Fishes; from Butter rather than Oil, from Milk and Eggs rather than Wine and Oysters: about these things our Church gives no rule that I know of. If at such times we use a very strict temperance somewhat more than ordinary, and do thereby become more Humble and Charitable, more Devout and Religious, the Church is satisfied, and her design answered; and whether we eat a little Flesh or a little Fish, she is not at all concerned. As to the Laws of the Land, about eating Fish rather than Flesh at certain times, they were Enacted upon a Civil account, not a Religious, *viz.* for the encouragement of Fishing-trade and Navigation, for the benefit of Sea-Towns and the like, as is exprest in some of the Statutes themselves, and most plainly taught in the Homily concerning Fasting. But let us hear what yet remains.

C H A P. XV.

*Of withholding the Scriptures from the Common-
People.*

L. *Here is only one thing more which he endeavours to vindicate from the exceptions made against it, viz. the forbidding to have the Scriptures in the vulgar language, so that the people cannot be admitted to read the same, who would be glad (as he expresses it) to read and understand the last Will and Testament of their Father.*

T. *And what can he alledge for this their cruelty to the people, so contrary both to Reason and to the very design of Writing the Holy Scriptures, as well as to many expresse commands delivered in those Sacred Writings?*

L. *He first says it is not forbidden, so the Bible be not corrupted by Sectaries; and if the people ask leave of their Superiours, to whom it belongs to judge whether they are capable of it.*

T. *If by the peoples asking leave he mean their obtaining it, he may say very truly (though very simply) that then they are not forbidden, viz. when they have got leave. But in the mean time it's very rare that the people do or dare ask this leave, since it's lookt upon as an ill sign of one inclining to heresie, (as they call it) and to very few by their good will do they grant this liberty, not commonly to any but such of whom they have all possible assurance that they are most firmly addicted to their party. As to his talk of the Bibles being corrupted by Sectaries, so far as it*

concerns our *English* Bibles (as for others they are able to speak for themselves) it is a most false and malicious reproach, nor are they able to prove it, as hath been sufficiently shewn by the Learned Writers of our Church, who have vindicated this our Translation from the frivolous objections which some *Romanists* have made against it. But besides that this is a vile slander, it is also a meer pretence as they make use of it, to defend their forbidding the people to read our *English* Bibles. For why else do they not more generally permit them to read the Bible of their own Translation, their *Doway*-Bible, and *Rhemish*-Testament? They dare not well trust their people even with these, notwithstanding all their corrupt glosses in the Margent, to make the Text speak in favour of their own opinions; at least they give little or no encouragement to the reading of them. For you shall seldom find them in the hands or houses of Papists amongst us. And though they are forced to give somewhat more liberty to such as live in Protestant-Countries, or where there are great numbers of Protestants, as in *France*; yet if you go but over into *Spain* or *Italy*, where the Pope and his Clergy bear more sway, there you shall hardly find in a whole Country one Bible in their own language, in the hands of any of the people. Yea if it should be found, it might bring them into danger of the Inquisition, and perhaps might cost them their lives. Thus severe they were also in *England* at the beginning of the Reformation, and most vehemently opposed the Translation of the Scriptures into *English*, and did all they could to suppress them, even sometimes burning the Bibles together with the Martyrs in Queen *Maries* days, being wont to say, this was the Book that made all the Hereticks. And it was indeed the Book from whence they
learned

learned those Truths which Papists as falsely call heresie, as the Pharisees did that Christian Doctrine which St. Paul preached.

L. There is little doubt but that common people of the Romish Church are generally kept from reading the Scripture, since I find not that my Author himself does directly deny it; nay he rather owns it, whilst he goes on to plead that all good things are not good for all; some abuse wine though it be good; and among Sectaries who will read the Bible, some understand it one way, some another, whence arise daily new heresies. For there are many hard passages, he adds, which are ill understood by people that have little or no learning. So St. Peter testifies, 2 Pet. 3. and therefore, as when there is dispute about any clause in a Will, the Will is put into the hands of Proctors, Lawyers, and Judges skill'd in the Law, so in order to our being sufficiently informed of the Will of our Saviour Christ, we must go to Sermons and Catechisms, there to be instructed in publick or private as much as we will.

T. This is their common objection against the peoples reading the Scriptures, that they are in danger of mistaking the sense of them, and so may fall into error or heresie. But pray consider if this be a sufficient reason for their not reading them, might it not have served as well to prevent the first writing of them, especially in a language which the common people understood? yet thus it was at the first; for the Law was given to the Jews in their own language, and in the same was the rest of the Old Testament written. Thus also the New Testament was written in Greek, a language then most generally understood in the world. And the Apostles wrote their Epistles to the Churches in this same language, which the common people did all understand. So that by their arguing this was a defect of the Divine Wisdom, to let the

the Scriptures come abroad at first in such a Tongue as the people were well acquainted with. Yet more than this, how frequently do we find in the Old Testament express commands given to the people to acquaint themselves with the Law, and to instruct their children in it with all possible care and diligence, as you may see *Deut. 6. 6.* and in many other places. This was the commendation both of *Timothy* and his Parents that from a child he had known the holy Scriptures, &c. *2 Tim. 3. 15.* Thus our Saviour bids the people *Search the Scriptures*, *Joh. 5. 39.* This was the honour of the *Bereans* that they examined the Apostles Doctrine by the Scriptures, *Act. 17. 11.* And this the Apostles still inculcated, that the people should take heed to the Scriptures, as to a light shining in a dark place. Now all this is spoken of the Books of the Old Testament, and surely there is every whit as much reason that we Christians should be as diligent in reading and studying the New Testament, where we have the most heavenly Discourses of our Blessed Saviour, with the History of his Life and Death, and the Epistles written by his holy Apostles, in all which we to this day are most nearly concerned, even the meanest of the people as well as others, and therefore they ought to have not only leave but all possible encouragement to be very conversant therein. This we are sure was the judgment of the Christian Church of old: for soon after the Apostles times, these Holy Scriptures, especially the Books of the New Testament, were translated into the several Languages of those people who had embraced the Gospel, by holy and learned men who were desirous to establish the Christian Religion amongst them. And so we find in succeeding times the Christian Writers very earnestly recommending the Study of Scripture to the common people, even
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to the women themselves, and highly applauding those who did most exercise themselves herein. The people then had Bibles in their hands, and it was accounted an high crime to deliver them up to the Heathens that sought for them. That *Latin* Translation of the Bible which is now in use amongst the Learned of the Church of *Rome*, is a plain testimony against themselves; for *Latin* was once the vulgar tongue of the people of *Rome*, and the Countries about it, and for their sakes the Bible was translated out of *Hebrew* and *Greek* into that language which was then in use. And though some may mistake the sense of Scripture, and as *St. Peter* speaks, *may wrest it to their own destruction*, yet is that no reason why it should be kept from common people, nor does *St. Peter* say the least word to any such purpose, he himself writing his Epistles to be read by them. But rather he exhorts them to *beware of being led away by the error of the wicked, and to grow in grace, and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18. And surely there is no better way to encrease in the knowledge of Christ, than by studying his own holy Gospel, where we have a full account of him, and of all that he did and suffered for our sakes, and wherein are contain'd all the Doctrines and precepts of the Christian Religion. If some men abuse wine, it does not therefore follow that even these men themselves must be always kept from it, if they may be reduced to sobriety and moderation in the use of it; much less ought wine to be therefore generally forbidden to others of whom it is not known that they do or will abuse it. Neither yet does the comparison hold; for wine may in it self be hurtful to some mens bodies, so that water may be fitter for them: but if any man receive hurt from the Scriptures, the fault is not in them but in himself, who

who falls into error through his own ignorance or inconsiderateness. And the best way to prevent or cure his error is not to forbid him the use of holy Scripture, but instruct him how to use it aright, perswade him chiefly to mind that which is plain and easie, and to frame his belief and practice accordingly; by which means he shall by the grace of God be enabled to know and do all that is necessary to Salvation. As for other matters that are more difficult and less needful, let him pass over them, or stay till he find an Interpreter. He that is thus humble and modest will be far from abusing Scripture to his hurt, and he that is not so, may as well mistake and abuse those Doctrines which he meets with in Sermons and Catechisms, and therefore by that reason should be kept from them too. Nay if this reason hold good, that Scripture must be withheld from the people, because they are in danger of perverting them to ill purposes, then they should rather be kept from the learned than the ignorant; for we shall find that commonly men of learning and knowledg have been the Authors of those Heresies which have at any time disturbed the Church, whilst men of meaner capacities, but of more piety and humility, have by the benefit of the Holy Scriptures been preserved in the truth. But are they indeed so careful of the people, that out of pure kindness to their souls they will not trust them with these holy Books, for fear they should abuse them to their hurt? How comes it to pass then that instead of these they provide other Books for them, in which there is a thousand times more danger, I mean Images and Pictures which they call Lay-mens Books, from whence they are rather like to learn Superstition and Idolatry than any thing which is good? Thus even in a literal sense whilst their people need bread they put them off with stocks
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and stones. To say nothing of those other Books which have heretofore been very common among them, viz. their lying Legends, composed by lazy Monks, full of such ridiculous stories and gross falsehoods that they are now ashamed to have them seen amongst Protestants.

L. He compares the Scriptures to a Fathers Testament, but surely it's an odd way to make the Son understand his Father's Will by wresting it out of his hands, and putting him off with other writings instead of it.

T. An odd way it is indeed, and gives just cause to suspect those of ill design who make use of it. For when the Son meets with any obscure clause in his Father's Will, though he go to consult the Lawyer about it, yet he still keeps the Will in his own hand, or a true Copy of it. But if the Lawyer should by violence take it from him, and let him know no more of it than he sees good, the poor man might well think himself very much wronged. Especially if the Lawyer should proceed by virtue of this Will to encroach upon the mans right, and yet will not allow him the benefit of having the Will to plead on his own behalf. And this is plainly the course of the Roman Church in the present case, for the Rulers withhold the Scripture from the people, that they may the more easily detain them in a blind obedience to those Doctrines and commands of their own which are contrary to it, and which they will not have examined by it. And you may well suspect the man has bad wares to put off, who will expose them no where but in a dark shop. It's much to be feared that Guide means not well, who would have my eyes put out or fast closed that I may follow him blindfold. He that teaches falshood as well as he that does evil is afraid of the light that will discover his error. But to conclude this, whatever Pa-
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pists may talk of the *obscurity* of Scripture, the true reason why they keep it out of the peoples hands is because it is too *plain*. I mean because it so plainly contradicts several Doctrines and practices that are now current in their Church. So plainly does the second Commandment forbid all worship of Images, that by their good will they would not have it come into the peoples sight. And as plainly doth the holy Scripture in other places forbid the worship of Angels or Saints, having Prayers in an unknown tongue, the taking away the Cup from the Laity; plainly it confutes their Doctrine of Transubstantiation, whilst it calls the holy Elements bread after Consecration. In these and several other instances doth Scripture so plainly make against them, that no wonder if therefore they are so much against the Scripture, as that they will not commonly permit the people to read it, but keep back from them this key of knowledg.

L. This seems to be the true reason, but so bad a one that they are ashamed to own it. And now I return you unfeigned thanks for the pains you have taken to confirm me in the truth, and to shew me the vanity and weakness of those arguings wherewith they of the Church of Rome do endeavour to excuse and palliate their gross errors, and to impose upon common people who are sometimes easily misled.

T. No great wonder if with their subtilties they impose upon such as cannot well distinguish betwixt specious pretences and solid reasonings. And indeed they do in some measure deserve to be imposed upon, who will so far trust to their own weak judgments, as not to seek direction and assistance from those who are able to give it; but do presently conclude, that if they themselves cannot answer a cunning Priest, no body esse can, and thereupon without more ado become

come his easie profelytes ; especially when some worldly interest draws them to it, which is an argument quickly discerned but not easily resisted. Yet it's strange to see how these same persons when they are gone off from our Church, presently seem so humble and modest as to suspect their own judgments, they commonly refuse to discourse with our Ministers, pretending they are not fit to meddle with controversies, nor hold disputes. They now refer themselves wholly to the Church, (their own Sect) the *Romish* Church, that must be their Judge and their Guide. They might before dispute and yield, and be Judges for themselves when they left our Church : but now forsooth they are got as the Priest tells them (whose word they must take for it) into an infallible Church, whose Doctrines and commands must never be questioned or examined, nor any thing heard that can be objected against them. All must be swallow'd without chewing, they must believe as the Church believes, though what that is they do not well know. This is the way that *Romish* Priests commonly take with them, and a cunning way it is for securing of the Converts they have once made, but so grossly partial, that a man of ordinary discretion may readily discern it, and no sincere lover of truth will be drawn to comply with it. For how can any man answer it to God or his own conscience, to depart from that Church wherein he has been baptized and educated, without a fair hearing what can be said *for* it; and when he is drawn away into another Church becomes so fixed and resolute, that he'll hear nothing that can be said *against* it? But you I confess have acted at another rate, and I cannot but commend your ingenuity and diligence herein, which I pray God to succeed for your establishment in that holy Religion in which you have hitherto

therto been instructed, and from which I hope you'l never be perverted. For it is the very truth of God, taught by his Son Jesus in his holy Gospel, the only infallible rule of Faith and Manners.

L. *I do stedfastly believe that it is so, and by the grace of God will never depart from it.*

T. Does your Author meddle with no other points of controversie betwixt us and the Church of Rome ?

L. *He mentions no more that I find, looking upon these I suppose as most material : but toward the end of this Chapter he heaps up many bitter invectives against our Ministers as if they spoke ill of the Romish Church out of meer malice against their consciences, only to make Papists envied and hated; and that they often cite the holy Scripture to no purpose, or to an ill one, and do also falsifie and cut off what is not to their liking, yea and have put whole Books out of the number of Canonical Scriptures; in fine, that they do all as the toy takes them, without thinking of any judgment or hell to come after.*

T. This is very severe indeed, but so grossly false and spiteful that it deserves no more notice or answer than the revilings of an angry scold. Only to the last heavy charge of putting out whole Books of Holy Scripture I shall answer a few words, and leave you to judge of the rest by what truth you shall find in this accusation.

Know then that as to the New Testament we receive for Canonical all the same Books which the Church of Rome it self does, and all other Christian Churches in the world so far as ever I have heard. And as to the Old Testament we receive all those Books which were acknowledged for Canonical by the Jewish Church (who are very competent witnesses in this case) or by the Christian Church for four hundred

162 *Of Points wheretn we and Papists differ,*

years after our Saviour, as learned Writers of our Church have demonstrated, and particularly Bishop *Cozens* before named in his History of the Canon of Scripture. As to those Books which are called Apocryphal, though we have them not in the same esteem with the Sacred Writings of the Old and New Testament, yet we have a just value for them, as the works of pious men, and of great antiquity; and our Church appoints Lessons out of them to be publicly read (though not on the Lords days) thereby recommending them to the people, who have them in their hands, and may read them as much as they please. And especially those two Books, *Ecclesiasticus* and that of *Wisdom* are well worthy to be read again and again, as containing most excellent moral rules for the direction and guidance of our lives. Consider then what an impudent thing it is for *Papists* to accuse our Church for putting out these Books of *Apocrypha*, which yet are in so much use amongst us, whilst they themselves endeavour in some sort to make the whole Bible Apocryphal, I mean by their hiding it so much from the common people, putting away not only some but even all the Books of Holy Writ very much from their sight. And some of their Authors do speak so meanly and contemptibly of these holy Books (which do so little service to their cause) that they seem not to have so much respect for them as we have for the *Apocrypha* it self. So that they of all people have least reason to condemn others for slighting or rejecting the holy Scriptures, and our Church hath as little reason to be condemned as any other in the whole world. As to his other spiteful suggestions, I leave it to your self or any other impartial person to judge whether I have said any thing against the Doctrine of their Church, without giving
good

good reason for it. And I can assure you I have not in this whole Discourse said one word against my conscience ; neither would I have you envy or hate any mans person, be he Papist or what he will, whilst you abstain from their errors. For though I do not believe the Popish fiction of Purgatory, yet I do firmly believe there is a future Judgment, and an Hell prepared for the wicked and ungodly, particularly for lyers and slanderers, and for such as hate their neighbours upon any pretence whatever. And is this all that your Author has to say ?

L. He adds nothing more in this Chapter, but advice to those who are seduced (as he calls it) that they should beg light from God, and weigh what he has said, and seek more instruction from good and learned Catholicks, meaning I suppose, Popish Priests chiefly.

T. There's little doubt of it. Now to prevent your being seduced by those who call themselves Catholicks but are not truly so, I shall wish you to follow his advice so far as it's good. Humbly beg of God to enlighten your mind with the knowledg of the truth, and be ever careful to do the will of God so far as you know it, that so you may be the better qualified for the assistance and direction of his good Spirit, which delights in men of pure hearts and humble minds. Moreover I advise you to weigh impartially what is said on both sides, and then be true to your own judgment and conscience in following that which has the plainest and fullest evidence of its truth. I would not have you out of pride and vanity thrust your self upon disputes ; but when you cannot well avoid the discourses of their Priests or Gentlemen, if you happen to be at any time somewhat puzzled with their arguments, do not hastily conclude them to be unanswerable, but consult with your Minister or such as may be

best able to inform and satisfie you. And you may do well to furnish your self with some of those Books that are written by our Divines in defence of the Church of *England* against the Papists. But above all Books, let me earnestly request you with great diligence to study and search the holy Scriptures, for in them you shall find the true way to eternal life. Read there our Blessed Saviours own most Heavenly Discourses, who spake as never man spake; and particularly read often his most admirable Sermon in the Mount, where you have the summ of Christian Religion. Read also the severall Epistles of the Apostles with the rest of those Sacred Writings as you have opportunity, and then honestly and impartially compare the Doctrines of our Church and those of the Church of *Rome* which differ from ours, with what is taught in these same holy Books: and what you shall find to be most plainly agreeable thereto, that own and embrace and evermore firmly adhere to.

L. The Council you give me is most fair and reasonable, which hitherto I have endeavoured to follow, and by Gods grace will continue so to do. For I can truly say it, my chief design is to please God and save my soul: And I cannot imagin any surer way to attain this than by studying well the Word of God, wherein he hath revealed his will, and the way to eternal salvation. And certainly God is so good and gracious that he will not fail to direct and guide those into the right way, who with sincere and honest minds do above all things desire and endeavour to know his will that they may do it. Yea I look upon it as an instance of his kindness and good providence, that I so happily met with you from whom I have received such full satisfaction. And as for the subtile arguments of Papists, I hope by that assistance which you have already given me, and yet further will do, I shall in a good measure be able to answer them.

them. In the following Chapter my Author produces several of these subtilties, which he calls pregnant arguments against Sectaries, and these I shall desire you to consider, and give an answer to.

T. I am very willing to do it, but that I may not tire you, we'll refer this to our next meeting.

L. I am well content, only one favour I shall request, that in the mean time you would please, at your leisure, to send me in writing the summ of what you have now discoursed, that I may have the benefit of perusing it, and fixing it better in my mind.

T. I shall readily grant your request; and praying God to lead you into and settle you in the truth, shall for this time bid you farewell.

L. Farewell, Good Sir.

The Second Part.

CHAP. I.

*Containing an Answer to some Arguments against
Protestants.*

T. **W**ELL met, Friend.

L. I am heartily glad, Sir, to meet you again so soon, and do return you many thanks both for the pains you took in your late Conference with me, and that you was pleased, as I desired, to send me the summ of it in writing, which I have read over again and again to my fuller satisfaction.

T. I shall reckon my self very well recompenced for what pains I have taken, if you reap any advantage thereby.

L. That I have done very much, I thank God. For upon the review of my Popish Author, so far as we have proceeded, I meet not there with any objection against our Religion, nor with any argument for Popery but what I can easily answer. Nay more than this, since I was with you, I

have read over the last Chapter of his Book, the consideration of which you defer'd till this our second meeting, and truly I have not been much gravel'd with any thing in it, but can tolerably well give answer thereto from what I have already heard from you. Nor do I find here much that is new, but many of the same things in other words dress'd up with much art and cunning.

T. I am glad you are so good a proficient; and since you tell me this, let us if you will, for a while at least, take a new method in our following discourse. Give me your Book, and for the trial of your skill I'll propose thence the arguments which your Author makes use of, and you shall return answers to the same.

L. I shall do my best, but must crave your assistance when I am at a loss.

T. That you may be sure I shall readily give, and if we meet with many the same things which we have had already, we shall the quicklier dispatch them. Only something I have to premise before I come to his arguments.

In the beginning of this his last Chapter he brings in his Scholar desiring to be furnish'd with some pregnant arguments for the reducing of Sectaries to the Catholick Church, which he says they have groundlessly forsaken and cruelly persecuted. Now what ground we (whom he unjustly calls Sectaries) had to forsake the *Romish* Church (not the Catholick) we have already shewn, and shall do more; but whilst he would insinuate that we Protestants have been grievous persecutors of Papists, this I am sure is a very groundless charge, and I wonder he had the impudence to fasten it upon us; especially considering how infamous their own Church hath long been for the most cruel bloody persecution of poor Protestants, meerly upon account
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of Religion, and that in this Kingdom, to go no further: Whereas it's very rare that any Papist hath suffered the loss of his life amongst us purely upon that account, nor should I desire ever to see such severity used toward them or any other Sect, if they will but live peaceably and not disturb the Government. But most certain and undeniable it is, that many of them have suffered for downright Treason and Rebellion, as in the Gunpowder-Plot, and at several other times. And indeed our Laws make it Treason for any of the Kings subjects to go to the Church of *Rome* for Orders, and then come over to draw away the people into communion with that Church; this being look'd on as a seducing of them from their Allegiance to his Majesty, which no wise Prince will suffer. And with good reason is it so look'd on, since few of these Priests will take the Oath of Allegiance, and do reckon themselves exempt from the Civil power, and both they and their deluded profelytes are taught to prefer the power of a foreign Potentate, viz. the Bishop of *Rome*, before that of their own Prince. Some of them indeed say (not all) that this his power is only in Spirituals: but whilst the Pope is judge in his own cause, what either is spiritual, or has a tendency to it, may he not under this pretence extend his power as far as he pleases? as you heard before. But though in this and other instances the principles of Papists are extremely dangerous to the Civil Government, yet I wonder whether Protestants may be permitted to live as quietly in *Italy* or *Spain*, as thousands of Papists do here in *England*. Nay at this day even in *France* itself, what disturbances and persecutions do poor Protestants meet with? and that chiefly, as is said, through the malicious instigations of fierce and furious Clergy men, whilst yet we hear not that they can in the
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least charge them with any seditious or unpeaceable behaviour. What impudence then is it for Papists to cast such dishonourable reflections upon our Government, whether of Church or State, as if we were guilty of I know not what rigorous proceedings against them? Whereas it will be hard to find any where in Christendom more mildness than in the Church of *England*, nor any where more cruelty and severity than in that of *Rome*, whose bloody Inquisition has been long talked of throughout the world.

But to follow your Author; yet before he brings forth his Arguments, he tells us, that Christ sends us to the Church, quoting *Matt. 18. 17.* That if we neglect to hear the Church, we must be counted for no better than Heathens and Publicans. What this makes to his purpose I do not well understand. For this seems plainly to be meant of that particular Church whereof we are Members, in peaceable communion wherewith we ought to live, rendring cheerful obedience to all its lawful injunctions. But what's this to the Church of *Rome*, which neither has any Authority over us in *England*, and whose impositions are notoriously sinful? He next quotes that of *St. Paul*, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* *That the Church is the pillar and ground of truth.* Which is true both of the Catholick Church, and of every particular Church that is a sound Member of it. For hereby is declared that the truth of the Gospel, that is the Christian Religion, is carefully preserved, openly profest and taught in the Christian Church. The expression here made use of is commonly thought to allude to the fixing up of Writings upon a Pillar in some publick place, that they may be seen and read of all, like that in *Josh. 8. 32.* But still I am to seek what this makes for his advantage: If he only intend by these Quotations to
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prove that a Man ought to live in communion with the true Church of Christ, and to behave himself peaceably and obediently in that particular Church of which he is a Member, Who denies it? Or what will he gain by it? Since this tends nothing to prove it our duty to become Members of the *Romish Church*, to believe all her Doctrines, and obey her commands. Well, but this is that he will now demonstrate we are all bound to, and that by five Arguments, all of them, as he fancies most strong and unanswerable, which we shall particularly survey and examine the strength of them. His first is, *That Church is to be heard in which there is most assurance that one is in the way to Salvation; but in the Roman Church there is most assurance of this, and therefore she is to be heard and obey'd.* What say you to this?

L. *I deny that there is most assurance of our being in the way to Salvation in the Roman Church.*

T. And well you may; but thus he goes on to prove it, *Protestants grant that one living and dying in the Roman Church may be saved, else they condemn all their Ancestors to the pit of Hell: and therefore those of that Church have most assurance of their Salvation, since it's granted by all that they are in the way to it; and thus he says it has been held by all the World time out of mind.* And to give full strength to his Argument, we must add what he has in other places, that *Papists deny that a Protestant can be saved, whilst Protestants grant that a Papist may; and therefore does not the Papist seem to be of the surer side?*

L. No, but the quite contrary, *I think, may be concluded from this very Argument, since, as I have before heard from you, this very uncharitableness of the Papists in condemning all that are not of their way, makes their own Salvation to be very hazardous, (Judge not, saith*
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our Saviour, lest ye be judged) whilst the Protestant by his Charity shews himself to be a better Christian, and consequently in the surer way to Salvation. And had I no other Argument against turning Papist, this alone would keep me from it, that I should then stand bound by the Decrees of Popes and Popish Councils to look upon all men in a state of Damnation who are out of the Romish Church: for so they have determined, as I have often heard, and my Author seems plainly to assert it.

T. There is a great deal of Truth and Reason in what you say: For this is the current Doctrine of their Church, though some of the common people will not own it. But beside this, it is to be considered, that though a Protestant may have charitable thoughts of an honest Papist, yet this makes nothing at all for the commendation of Popery, since it is not for *this* that he is saved (not for his embracing of Popery, I mean) but for his belief of the Gospel and his obedience to it. In the mean time Popery is his disease, and makes his condition very hazardous, only we hope that possibly he may be saved notwithstanding it. As a man that has the Plague, or has taken poison, it's possible he may recover, but yet his condition is very sad and full of danger; and no man in his wits will venture upon Poison or a Pesthouse, because there is a possibility of escaping. Whatever Charity then we may have for a well-meaning Papist, I'll assure you we have no good opinion of Popery: but do with great reason assert, that they who embrace it do run a great hazard of their Salvation; whilst they entertain Doctrines, not only false in themselves, but very pernicious in their effects, being great hindrances to piety and holiness, without which no man shall see God. And beside their bad Doctrines, great is their danger, whilst they corrupt

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Religion by their Idolatrous worship; and here in this Kingdom disobey their Rulers, and Schismatically withdraw from that Church with which they ought to hold Communion, and this meerly in compliance with the usurpation of a foreign Power. These and many other ill things they do, which we would not for a World be guilty of: yet after all, we are not rash to pass a Sentence of Damnation upon them; to their own Master let them stand or fall; to whose mercy we leave them, whilst they deliver us up to Satan. But this while our Charity gives small encouragement to a wise man to turn *Papist*.

L. If the rest of his Arguments be like this, there's no such strength in them as he boasts of.

T. You must not expect good Arguments for a bad Cause. As to what he talks of condemning our Ancestors to Hell, it no way follows, though we should be of opinion that Salvation is not ordinarily to be had in the present Church of *Rome*. For those Ancestors of ours who first embraced Christianity were no *Papists*, paid no homage to the Bishop of *Rome*; neither in those days had that Church defiled it self with those corruptions which were brought in by degrees in after Ages. And withal, the ignorance of our forefathers in those corrupter times may do somewhat to excuse them: but should we continue in their errors, who now enjoy the clearer light of the Gospel, we were utterly inexcusable. Whilst we have charity for our Ancestors, we ought to take care of our own Souls. Neither yet was there any time when the whole World own'd the *Romane* Church to be the only way to Salvation, as he boldly and falsely asserts.

L. Surely no: For when Religion was most pure in the Church of Rome, no doubt but the Members of any other
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sound and orthodox Church might be saved as well as those of that Church, which did not then claim jurisdiction over all other Churches, as you have formerly told me, nor was it looked upon as necessary to Salvation for a Man to own the Popes Supremacy in those early days.

T. Most certainly it was not; nor is there any more reason that now it should. I am sure this is none which your Author has produced, viz. That *Protestants* generally grant it possible for a *Papist* to be saved, whilst *Papists* will not grant that a *Protestant* can. On which I shall bestow a few more words. And pray take notice that this is a very deceitful way of arguing, and has little of strength in it if it be well examined. A *Protestant* is never the worse for a *Papists* hard thoughts of him, nor a *Papist* the better for our greater charity to him. We have other Rules and Measures by which we are to proceed in the present case, and are to consider whether the *Papist* has any good reason for his uncharitable opinion, else he himself may be hurt by it, but not we nor our Cause. Sometimes, I grant, in matters of difference, a Man may be inclinable to yield to that which he perceives both parties are agreed in, but this will by no means be found in the case before us. For the *Protestant* does not grant the *Papist* to be in a safe way to Salvation; nor yet that *Popery* (truly so called) is at all the way to Salvation, but rather a great hindrance to it: the utmost he grants is only this, that possibly a *Papist*, notwithstanding the dangerous errors and corruptions of their Church, may be saved. But in the mean time he asserts, and he proves that the belief and practice of the Holy Christian Religion, which is most purely profest amongst *Protestants*, is the surest and safest way to Salvation. Now, when a *Papist* shall come and tell you that *Protestants* are no *Christians*,

ans, have no Faith, no Holiness, are out of the Catholick Church, and therefore cannot possibly be saved, all this noise and nonsense ought no more to affect you than the ravings of a Mad-Man, or the like rude and insolent Language of furious *Quakers*, who, like Mad-men indeed at their first coming up, used to cry aloud to any Man that opposed them, *Thou art damn'd, Man, thou art damn'd.* And at this rate, I have heard, do the wretched besotted followers of *Muggleton* talk at this day. And truly herein both they and the *Papists* deserve to be regarded all alike, That is, the Men pitied, and their Censures slighted and despised.

And yet to shew you more plainly, if it may be, the folly of this way of Arguing, let me give you a like instance whereby you may judge of it, which, with others of the same nature, I find made use of by some of our Writers to this same purpose. Suppose we then a Man sick of some dangerous Disease, and seeking to an able Physician for advice, which when he has received, and is about to follow it, in comes a bold Mountebank and tells the Man it's utterly impossible he should ever recover by hearkning to his Physician; but if he will be guided by him, all shall be well, for he has an infallible Cure at hand that will certainly do the work. Now, suppose the Physician be so modest that he will not answer this impudent Quack in his own language, nor say it's impossible for his Medicines to do any good, only he deals honestly with his patient, and tells him of the danger of trusting himself in such a Mans hands, who takes very desperate courses, and where he cures one kills Twenty: but for himself he shall prescribe nothing but what he can demonstrate to be safe and good, and which, through God's blessing, hath often been very effectual. Now in point of prudence, what ought the patient to do
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in this case? What, must he reject a skilful and safe Physician because he speaks with modesty and caution, and chuse the daring ignorant Mountebank, because he talks big and boldly, and boasts of Infallible Receipts, of a certain and speedy Cure?

L. No, surely, by no means.

T. Yet so he should do by this Authors Argument for the choice of their Church, because, forsooth, she condemns all others and commends her self, talking as much of Infallibility as the most cheating Mountebank is used to do, and with much what the same reason and truth. The Case is so like, that I need not trouble you with applying it.

L. No, you need not: For I understand it well enough, and as well do I discern the weakness of his Argument.

T. And yet for your fuller satisfaction, if need be, I would have you read that Sermon I formerly told you of, on 1 Cor. 3. 13. by a Reverend Divine of the Church of *England*, where you will find this piece of sophistry so shamefully basted and exposed, that he must be a very silly and shameless Priest that will ever offer to make use of it more. Wherefore, to all that hath been said on this subject, I shall only suggest one thing more to your consideration, *viz.* that so far as this Argument hath any force in it, it may with great advantage be retorted on *Papists* themselves. For if that way be safest to be chosen in which both parties are agreed, then are we *Protestants* clearly on the safer side: For they themselves own the Scriptures which we embrace, they approve of the Creeds which we hold, they cannot but allow of the Worship of God in the name of Jesus Christ, with all other the substantials of our Religion, which as I have often said, is nothing else but Christianity it self.

But

But now we do utterly disown the additions which the *Romish Church* has made to the Ancient Creeds; many of their traditions we also reject as being plainly repugnant to the Holy Scriptures; we condemn their worship of Images, of Angels and Saints, as being neither commanded by God, nor practised by the Church of Christ in the Primitive times. Hence then you may be informed what is safest to chuse and follow, whether the plain and pure Religion of Jesus Christ profess in our Church, and acknowledged by all Christians in the World, even by the Papists themselves, or to swallow down all those new Articles which their Church has added to the Christian Faith, and defile our selves with those superstitions with which they have corrupted the Worship of God: Many of which Doctrines and Practices are disapproved by all Christians but those of their own Sect, and which, upon good grounds, we believe to be so utterly unlawful and pernicious, that they make the condition of those in the *Romish Church* very hazardous, and for our selves should we embrace them, we could have no hopes of Salvation. Judge then upon the whole what is safest to be chosen.

L. I confess I see little or no difficulty in the Case, wherefore pray proceed to the second Argument.

T. I shall repeat to you what he calls so, though for my part, I find nothing in it that may deserve the name of an Argument. Thus it runs, That Church is not to be heard, whose Authors and chief Doctors are meer Cozeners and Impostors, and such, he says, are all but those of the Roman Church, and therefore are not to be heard.

L. I deny that the Authors and Doctors of our Church are Cozeners and Impostors.

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T. Thus

T. Thus he goes about to prove it, *They all say that they will reform the Roman Church with the pure Word of God*, and yet they have never done it, nor will ever be able, and therefore they are all meer Cozeners and Impostors: This is all the proof he gives.

L. This all seems to me just nothing: for I reckon that the Author of our Religion was no other than our Blessed Saviour; and the first Teachers of it were the holy Apostles and Evangelists, who taught it by their Preaching, and then committed it to Writing in the Holy Word of God, which we most readily embrace, and in which our Religion is wholly contained. And surely these were no Cozeners or Impostors; but rather they who have corrupted Religion by their own novel inventions, contrary to this Holy Word.

T. This is very true that you say, but here by the Authors of our Church, he means those Learned men who were instrumental for the reforming it from those inventions, which he pleads for as a part of Religion.

L. This I believe to be his meaning. But since these good men, by Gods assistance, did actually reform our Church by the pure Word of God, from those Popish corruptions wherewith it was before polluted, I admire why he should say they were Cozeners and Impostors for not doing what they pretended they would, when as they have really done it.

T. And admire you still may: For I cannot guess at his reason; except by the *Roman Church* he means that particular Church which is at Rome; or else the whole Sect of *Papists*, all who own the Supremacy of the Bishop of Rome, and so stile themselves the *Romish Church*. Take it in either of these senses, and I confess this *Romish Church* is not yet reformed. But this rather shews their obstinacy than any thing of deceitfulness in those who have attempted their Reformation.

If the Prophets and pious people of old would have healed *Babylon* and she would not be healed, was this any dishonour to the Prophets? Neither surely were any of the first Reformers so vain, as to say that they would certainly reform the whole Church of *Rome*, though they might heartily desire it, and in their several places diligently endeavour it. And, thanks be to God, through his assistance and blessing, these their endeavours have been most happily successful in many Nations of the World, and particularly in this our Kingdom of *England*, for the delivering of our Church from the Ulurpation of the Pope, and from the corruptions of Popery: the Blessed Fruits whereof we do at this day enjoy, and hope we shall still continue so to do, through the same Divine Grace and Favour which first bestowed this mercy upon us, though most unworthy of the same. But leave we this shadow of an Argument, and pass to his third.

L. *Pray do so.*

T. It is this, *That Church is only to be heard which has all the marks of a true Church; but the Roman Church has them and no other, therefore she only is to be heard.* These marks, as he goes on, are *Antiquity, Miracles, Holiness of Life and Doctrine, Universality, Unity, Succession of Bishops from the Apostles*; these he calls *Infallible Marks of the true Church*, which belong to none but that of *Rome*.

L. *These marks of the Church, or most of them, I do well remember you spoke largely to in the beginning of our first conference; and from what you have there said, I am furnished with a sufficient Answer to this Argument, viz. that the Church of Rome, as it is now corrupted with those Doctrines wherein Popery consists, (such as the Popes Supremacy and Infallibility, Purgatory, Transubstantiation, &c.) it cannot truly plead those marks he lays down.*

For these Popish Doctrines are not of the same Antiquity with pure Christianity; there never were any true Miracles wrought to confirm them; they are not Holy in themselves, nor do tend to promote Holiness of Life, but rather the contrary; they are not nor ever were Universally received by all Christian Churches; nor is there much Unity amongst themselves in their explication of them; though if there were, this signifies nothing, as being but the Unity of a Sect within it self: and though their Bishops may live in the same City that the Apostles once did, yet they did not receive these Doctrines from the Apostles, but have introduced them since, some at one time, some at another, and therefore in respect of Doctrine they are not the Apostles Successors, nor are to be hearkned to as such.

T. What you alledge is most undeniably true. And let me further add, that suppose the Church of Rome were now as pure in its Doctrine and Worship as in the very days of the Apostles it was, so that these marks did really belong to it, yet this is no good Argument that we must all therefore be of the Church of Rome, if ever we hope to be saved; since many other Churches might plead the same, even all that received the Christian Religion in the same purity and simplicity, whose Members therefore might have as good grounds to hope for Salvation. But when we further consider how that Church has degenerated from its Primitive purity (beside that it has no dominion over us) there is still much less reason that we should, for the embracing of her Communion, desert our own Church of *England*, which is a most sound part of the Catholick Church as any this day in Christendom. To her agree all the marks of a true Church, as I have formerly shewn. She hath these mention'd by this Author, Antiquity, &c. For the Doctrines of our Church are as old as the times of

our Saviour and his Apostles. This is that true Christian Doctrine which was confirmed by all those *Miracles* which are recorded in the *New-Testament*. These Doctrines are all *Holy* as well as *True*, and have a natural tendency to make men *Holy* and *Good*. These are *Universally* received by all Christian Churches that now are or ever were in the World, being the very same you find summ'd up in the Apostles Creed. Thus are we at *Unity* with the truly Catholick Church; and thus whilst our Ministers Preach the very same Doctrines, use the same Worship and Sacraments which the Apostles did, they are in that respect truly their Successors. Yea beside this, those Bishops of our Church whom God made use of for the Reformation of it, did receive their Orders from those who were of the Church of *Rome*, so that if their Ordination be valid, so is ours; if they have a succession from the Apostles, so have we: To say nothing of what is commonly related in History, that some of the Apostles or Apostolical men sent by them, first planted Christianity in these parts, from which time it was never utterly rooted out. But I think I need add nothing more on this Head, having already said so much in another place.

L. No, Sir, but rather proceed to the fourth Argument.

T. It is this, *That Church is to be heard which takes the narrow way that leads to Life, (Matt. 7.) but the Roman Church takes it, and therefore she is to be heard.* And this he proves, because she takes (as he says) not only the way of Gods commands, but also the narrow way of Christs Counsels. What say you to this?

L. Even the same in effect that you lately said upon the former Argument, viz. that supposing it to be true that the Church of Rome does take this narrow way, yet it is not

she alone that takes it, and therefore there is no necessity that I should renounce all other Churches for Communion with her. I am sure there is no reason why I should on this account forsake our own Church, wherein the precepts of Christ are most plainly taught and strictly urged upon the people; and in the very same way to Heaven are we daily exhorted to walk, in which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles have led us by their Example as well as Doctrine, even the way of Piety, Righteousness and serious Holiness.

T. Your Answer is solid and true.

L. But I have yet somewhat more to say against his Argument, and do directly deny that their Church takes the same way to Salvation in all things which our Saviour hath proposed in his Gospel. For whatever he talks of their following, not only his Commands but his Counsels, yet sure I am that their Church requires many things to be believed and done in order to Salvation, which our Blessed Saviour never commanded, counsel'd or taught; and therefore in these things they do not take the way of the Gospel, but one of their own devising. For in the Gospel we nowhere find that a Man cannot be saved, except he acknowledge the Popes Supremacy, believe Transubstantiation, worship Images, &c. These things, I think, are directly contrary to the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel, and yet these, with many more of like nature, are required in the Roman Church with all strictness imaginable, in doing of which, she takes not the way of the Gospel, nor therefore in this ought she to be heard.

T. Most certainly she ought not. But you have all the reason in the World to remain fixed in Communion with your own Church, which requires nothing to be believed or practised as of necessity to Salvation, but what is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Herein following the direction which our Saviour gave

to his Apostles, and in them to their Successors, *Matt. 28. ult.* that they should teach the people to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them; and whoso doth these things shall certainly be saved.

L. We have no reason to doubt it, since our Lord Jesus is the Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him. But pray what means this Writer by his distinction betwixt the Commands and the Counsels of our Saviour?

T. As to that, you must know there are some eminent instances of Piety and Zeal, which are not expressly enjoined in the Gospel to all men upon condition of Salvation, but rather are recommended by our Blessed Saviour to some particular persons in circumstances proper for them, to such as being enflamed with great love, and furnished with peculiar advantages and larger measures of grace, are able to perform them. Such for instance is that about living a single life, in order to our greater freedom in God's Service, which is stiled, making our selves *Eunuchs for the Kingdom of God*. Now this is not absolutely commanded, but rather, I say, recommended to such as can both live chastly in a single state, and also are capable, all circumstances considered, of doing God most service in that state. And this I reckon is left to every mans own prudence to determine. Wherefore some Learned men of our own Church as well as the Romish, do call this a Counsel rather than a Command. Since he that Marries sins not, and yet he that forbears to Marry in order to God's Glory and the interest of Religion, does hereby express his virtue and zeal in a more eminent degree: And therefore according to that of *St. Paul*, though he that Marries does well, yet he that in this case Marries not does better. And I find some that look on this as the only instance of a Counsel distinct from a Command: but

the *Romanists* add more, as particularly that of voluntary poverty from the words of our Saviour to the young Man, *If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor, &c.* What was there commanded to this particular person, they call a Counsel to others, though for what good reason I know not.

L. *But wherein does it appear that their Church takes the way of these Counsels more than other Christians?*

T. They pretend to do it above others, because they strictly forbid their Clergy to marry, and do mightily cry up a single life as a state of great perfection. And for this end they have Monasteries and Nunneries, into which multitudes of men and women enter, and withdrawing themselves from common conversation and business, do vow to live a single life all their days. These people they call the *Religious*, as if Religion consisted in running out of the world rather than in abstaining from the evil of it. Of these they have several Orders, and most of them vow poverty as well as chastity. They renounce all propriety in worldly goods, and some of them live by begging. Though commonly this is a meer cheat; for many of these Orders have vast riches among them in common, though none of them can lay claim to a single share for himself. Yea all their loud talk of sanctity and strictness above others is meer pretence and proud boasting, as I have formerly shewn you. Whilst they pretend to follow Christs counsels, they do in many things break his plain commands, as even now you observed. Like the Pharisees of old, who whilst they were very zealous for their *own traditions, made void the commandments of God.* In some things they make the way to Heaven narrower than Christ himself hath done, but in others they take that liberty which he never gave them, and afford men hopes of salvation
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on easier terms than the Gospel will warrant, as is evident in their Doctrine of Attrition before mention'd. Even this their strictness in enjoining a single life to all Clergy-men, is an occasion of great looseness. And by this means whoredom it self, which God hath so severely forbidden, is counted a less crime and dishonour in men of that Order than Marriage, which their Church condemns though God allows it, nay and this openly maintain'd by some of their stricter Writers. But I wonder who gave their Church authority to turn Christs counsel (allowing that distinction) into a command to any one order of men. Indeed our Blessed Saviour has given neither command nor counsel to Clergy-men more than others to abstain from Marriage. Some of the Apostles had wives, St. Peter amongst the rest, as we find *Mat. 8. 14.* St. Paul tells us it was lawful for him to marry also, as well as St. Peter and other Apostles, *1 Cor. 9. 5.* And amongst other qualifications of a Bishop (*1 Tim. 3. 2. Tit. 1. 6.*) you find mention made of his wife and children, without the least intimation that this was either unlawful or indecent. And for some ages after the Apostles, the Marriage of Clergy-men was commonly allow'd. Some of the Fathers it's true do mightily extol perpetual Virginity, and seem less favourable to Marriage than they have any just ground for; since there is nothing that can be alledged either from Scripture or reason which may reflect the least dishonour upon chaste Marriage in any sort of men whatever; for it was instituted in the time of mans innocency, was allow'd to the Priests under the Law, and is said in the times of the Gospel to be *honourable in all men*, without exception of one or other. But the truth is, as matters are now managed in the Church of Rome, which in the way of worldly subtilty and cunning

cunning is very wise in her generation, this restraint of the Clergy from marrying is a piece of singular policy, tending mightily to advance the wealth and power of their Church; and renders the Clergy less dependant upon Princes, and consequently more intirely at the Popes pleasure. But waving these crafty contrivances, and all vain pretences to a strictness greater than the Gospel requires, our Church, as I have before told you, doth plainly and honestly propose the same way to salvation which our Blessed Saviour himself hath done, even the way of repentance, faith and uniform obedience to all his commands. She requires all men whether married or single to live in strict purity and chastity, which will render the Marriage-bed undefiled; but then whether of these states they will chuse, she leaves all sorts of men to their own liberty, as our Saviour has done. She exhorts and enjoyns all men to be true to their Baptifinal Vow, in which they renounced the world with its pomps and vanities; but does not call them to enter into any Monastick vows, nor perswade them to leave their friends, their families and employments, to run into holes and corners there to tell over their prayers by their Beads, and live in ease and idleness by the sweat of other mens brows; or going about to beg whilst they ought rather to work with their hands, that they themselves might be able to give to those that need. She earnestly presses all men to endeavour after perfection in every grace and vertue, and especially to be much in works of mercy and charity; but yet she does not fright people with stories of Purgatory to bring in their wealth to the Church, nor teach them that there is any great perfection in leaving their honest callings to run into a Monastery, bringing their riches along with them thither. She requires constant temperance
and

and sobriety, and sometimes imposes fasting and abstinence; but then whether men eat a little flesh or fish, oyl or butter, she thinks it not a matter of the least moment, but leaves all men to their own choice and prudence. In a word she does not with the Pharisee teach for doctrines the commands of men, but diligently inculcates the express commandments of Almighty God, delivered to us in his holy Word. And tho' she would not have us so foolish and proud as to think of meriting Heaven by our own good works, yet she teaches that upon our *patient continuance in well doing*, we shall through the mercies of God, and the merits of Christ, certainly obtain eternal life; but upon no others terms does she encourage any man to hope for it. And thus you see how our Church teaches us to take that same safe and narrow, but sweet and pleasant way to salvation, which is proposed to us in the Gospel.

L. I am fully perswaded she does so; God grant me grace ever to walk in this holy way, and then I shall not doubt of an happy end. Pray proceed to his last argument.

T. I shall so, and this it is, *That Church is not to be heard which has no solid reason for her keeping the Sabbath-day on the day she does keep it, but no Church or Congregation of Sectaries has this, and therefore none of them ought to be heard. What say you to this?*

L. I say that we of the Church of England (whom he unjustly calls Sectaries) have good reason for our keeping the Sabbath on that day we do keep it; even as good reason as the Church of Rome it self has.

T. He goes on to prove the contrary thus, *No Church of Sectaries has Scripture for keeping the Sabbath-day on Sunday, and no longer on Saturday as God commanded it, and yet they reject tradition upon which ground the Roman Church keeps the Sunday in lieu of Saturday,*
and

and therefore they have no solid reason for what they do, &c.

L. I answer we have Scripture for keeping one day in seven, *viz.* the fourth Commandment. And we read that after our Saviours Resurrection the Apostles and Disciples commonly assembled together on the first day of the week, which is called the Lords-day, Revel. 1. 10. And then we have tradition to assure us that this day was observed by the Christian Church ever since, which tradition we may plead for our practice, I trow, as well as the Church of Rome.

T. Yes certainly we may; for though we reject a great many ill things which they would thrust upon us for old traditions (many of them being meer novelties of their own devising) yet we do by no means reject such traditions as have sufficient evidence of their having been generally received by all Christian Churches, from the very times of the Apostles down to our days; and of this nature do learned men generally affirm the observation of the Lords-day to be. And what you alledg from Scripture may very well serve to recommend to us so ancient and general a practice. To all this, besides the great equity and reasonableness of the thing in it self, you may add the authority of those whom God hath set over us in Church and State: all which being put together, (leaving the nice disputes that have been about this matter) is a sufficient ground for our observation of the first day of the week as a Christian Sabbath, a day of rest from our common employments, devoted to the more solemn worship and service of God both in publick and private. As solid reason therefore do we give for our practice herein as the Church of Rome it self can do, or any other Church in the world.

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And thus we have done with his five mighty arguments, in which upon a little examination, there appears nothing of strength or solidity. He next musters up some weighty objections, as he reckons them, against those whom he calls Sectaries, which he says ought to make them very much doubt whether they be secure in the way they are in. And here, according to his usual vain way of bragging, he makes this large offer (which yet he will never make good) that all Priests, Jesuits and Catholicks over all the world will turn to their way, if they can but get from their Ministers a clear and satisfactory resolution of the following doubts.

L. It was cunningly done of him to call for a satisfactory resolution: since though it be as clear as the light at noon-day, yet they may still pretend that it is not satisfactory.

T. They may so, though I question not but it will appear such to all that are impartial and judicious. These doubts I shall propose to you in order, and hear what you your self can say for the resolving of them.

L. I shall give in the best answers I am able, and where I am at a loss shall still desire your help.

CHAP. II.

A resolution of some doubts and questions proposed to Protestants.

T. First he demands whether it can be clearly shewn, that our Ministers were sent by Almighty God to preach, and to reform the Roman Catholick Church, or whether they are not some of the false Prophets who say, The Lord saith, when the Lord hath not sent them, Ezek. 13. 6.

L. There seems no great difficulty in resolving this doubt, since our Ministers had lawful Ordination, and thereby had authority to preach the Word of God. And by the light of this word they discovered many errors and abuses in the Roman Church, wherewith we were foully polluted, and by Gods blessing, and the assistance of lawful authority, they were very instrumental in reforming us from the same. Now whilst they proved their Doctrine by this Word of God, they are not to be compared to those false Prophets who taught the people lyes and vanity, as we have it Ezek. 13. 7, 8.

T. Your answer is sufficient and very clear. For since our first Reformers did not publish a new Religion, but rather restored the old, by removing those corrupt additions that had been made to it, they did not need any extraordinary commission from Heaven, such as Moses had from God when he delivered the Law, and as the Apostles had from Jesus Christ, when they were first sent to preach the Gospel. But it was sufficient that they were duly qualified by Gods Spirit for the work of the Ministry, and were lawfully called to it by those who had authority in the Church to ordain

ordain them to that Office. Such as these are truly said to be sent of God, and are therefore bound in the execution of this their Office, to do what belongs to it, for the rectifying of mens errors, and reforming them from all evil and corrupt practices, whether in the worship of God or in their common conversation. And thus did those holy and learned men, both Bishops and others, behave themselves, who were the blessed instruments of reforming the Church of *England* from Popery. For the carrying on of which good work, God inclined the hearts of our Kings to employ their power for the assistance and encouragement of the Clergy who were engaged in it. And herein they did no other than what *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and other pious Kings amongst the *Jews* did in reforming the *Jewish* Church. And as they needed no new commission from Heaven then for the reformation they wrought, having the Law of God to be their rule and warrant, no more did our Kings and Bishops whilst they had the Gospel to be theirs according to which they proceeded by degrees. Thus in the first place King *Henry* the Eighth abolished the Popes Supremacy, that great fundamental fallshood of Popery, whilst he retain'd in a manner all other points of it. But with great courage and justice he delivered his Kingdom from that yoke of bondage under which the Nation had long groaned, even from the Usurpation of the *Roman* Bishop, declaring that he had no manner of power or jurisdiction in his Majesties Dominions; but that the King himself, next under God and his Christ, is Head of this Church, that is, the Supreme Moderator and Governour over all persons, and in all causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil in these his Realms. Wherefore the King, with the advice and assistance of his Bishops and Clergy, may as lawfully

fully take care for the Reformation of the Church according to the Word of God, within his own Dominions, as the Kings of *Israel* or *Judah* might do in theirs. Yea, he is obliged to do it, and no foreign power, Prince or Prelate hath any the least right to hinder and controul him herein: not the Bishop of *Rome* any more than he of *Jerusalem* or *Antioch*. And thus far the generality of the Popish Clergy, both the Bishops and the Universities concurr'd with the King, even such men as *Bonner* and *Gardiner*. The Popes power being thus broken and abolished, this made way for a more thorough Reformation of the Doctrine and worship from many foul errors and superstitions in the days of *Edward* the Sixth. This was for a while interrupted in the reign of *Queen Mary*, but was afterward restored and perfected by the authority of *Queen Elizabeth*, of blessed memory, soon after her entrance upon the Government. And thus was the Reformation of our Church, according to the rule of Gods holy Word, most happily begun, carried on and compleated, in a peaceable, orderly and deliberate manner, by just and lawful authority, even that of the whole Kingdom whether Ecclesiastical or Civil. Of which you have an account at large in a late accurate and full History of our Reformation by a Learned hand; an Abridgement whereof is done by the same Author in a little room, if the History it self be too large for you. Our first Reformers then were no Impostors or false Prophets, but were indeed sent of God, though in an ordinary way, being rightly Ordained to the Ministry, and duly qualified for that Sacred Office; they were guided and directed by the plain Word of God, own'd and succeeded by his Providence, allow'd and encouraged by his Vicegerents our Kings and Queens; and the Reformation
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at length peaceably and firmly established by the Laws of the Land

L. *This doubt, I think, is clearly enough resolved, and to me very satisfactorily. Pray what's the next?*

T. *He asks whether it can be made good what Luther and Calvin, with all Protestants and Presbyterians have so long boasted they could do, viz. Reform convincingly any one of the silliest Roman Catholicks that is: and to begin let them do it in the matter of the Real Presence.*

L. *I do not well understand what he means by this. For I think there is no question to be made of it, but Luther and Calvin (though they were not the Reformers of our Church) with other learned Protestants have convincingly reformed many that were Roman Catholicks: and in the matter of the Real Presence as well as other points these Converts have been convinced of their error, and brought to a sounder judgment agreeable to Scripture and reason.*

T. *I think indeed there is more difficulty in finding out the meaning of this question than in answering it, though somewhat like it he had before. He cannot surely mean that no people who once profest themselves Roman Catholicks (as his phrase is) have ever been convinced of the errors of the Roman Church so as to forsake the same: for thus it hath been with some whole Nations, and particularly our own. For we grant that in these latter ages our people were generally infected with those errors, though from the beginning it was not so. And as to Luther and Calvin; though they did great service for the Re-forming of the Church in their own Countries, yet neither they nor any Presbyterians were the chief instruments of that work among us, but Holy Bishops, and many sound and orthodox Preachers ordain'd by them, who taught the truth as it is in Jesus, and sealed with their blood the truth of what they taught. These*

men by their zealous Preaching, their holy living and chearful dying (after the example of the Apostles and other Martyrs in the Primitive times) did by Gods blessing win over thousands to embrace the Doctrine of the Gospel in its native purity, rejecting those Popish errors in which before they had been blindly train'd up. Wherefore he might as well say that the Apostles never converted any from Heathenism to Christianity, as that our Ministers have never reformed any from Popery. What then can he mean? I can scarce guess what, except that they cannot reform a Papist whilst he still remains one; which is as if we should say that the Apostles never converted any heathens, because whilst they remain'd heathens they were not converted. But I am not willing to think him so weak and silly, and therefore till he speaks plainer shall trouble my self no more with this, but proceed to his next question, which runs thus, *Can you prove to me clearly out of the written word (which you teach, ought only to be follow'd as the guide to Heaven) that the Sabbath-day is commanded by God to be kept on Sunday, and that little children are to be baptized?*

L. Part of this was mention'd before, viz. that about keeping the Sabbath, for which you shew'd there is enough from Scripture to warrant our practice, besides the constant custom of the whole Christian Church ever since the Primitive times, and I suppose the same may be said for the Baptism of Infants.

T. I judge it may, and that upon very good grounds: For we know that Children were admitted members of the Jewish Church by the solemn rite of Circumcision; and since our Saviour hath no where given the least intimation that this priviledg should be taken from them, I can see no reason why the children of Christian Parents may not be solemnly consecrated

crated to God by Baptism, and so admitted members of the Christian Church. And (to omit many other Texts which speak in favour of infants) this without any wresting of the words, may be fairly drawn from that commission given to the Apostles and their Successors, *Mat. 28. 19. Go ye therefore and teach* (or disciple) *all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.* They were to make Disciples of whole Nations, which surely comprehends both Parents and Children. First, the Parents were to be instructed in the Christian Faith, and upon their profession of it to be baptized. And then they themselves being devoted to God and entred into Covenant with him, since Parents have power over their children to dispose of them for their good, and to lay engagements on them for that end, surely it was lawful for them to devote their children also to God, and to enter them into Covenant with him by Baptism, thereby laying a strict obligation upon them, when they come to years of discretion, to perform their part of this holy Covenant if ever they hope for any benefit by it; the Parents also being bound to acquaint their children with their duty so soon as they are capable of learning it. Thus when any one from among the heathens became a profelyte to the *Jews*, when he himself was circumcised, so were his children also. Yea learned men tell us that it was also the custom to wash these profelytes in pure water, and that very probably our Saviour was pleased to accommodate himself to this same usage of theirs; in his instituting of Baptism for the more solemn admission of members into his Church. Now (as an excellent Writer argues) suppose that our Blessed Saviour instead of the word *Baptizing* should have used that of *circumcising*, and have said, *Go teach all Nations,*

circumcising *them in the name*, &c. would not all men have been apt to think that the same priviledg which the *Jews* had of admitting their children into Covenant by Circumcision, that Christian Parents also should have the like? why then may not the same be reasonably argued from the words, though Baptism be here named, and not Circumcision? Very probable it is that the Apostles thus understood it, and that they practised accordingly, when we read of their Baptizing such and such persons and their households, as *Act. 16. 15, 33.* amongst whom there might be some children for any thing that can be shewn to the contrary. And certain we are that very early in the Christian Church infants were admitted to Baptism; and thence hath it continued to this day to be the general custom of all Churches throughout the world. And pray take good notice that though our Church allows nothing to be imposed upon our belief or practice as necessary to salvation, but what is contain'd in Gods holy Word, yet she hath great regard to antiquity, to the customs of the truly Catholick Church, and the current Doctrine of the Fathers, and requires Ministers to have due respect thereto in their Exposition of Scripture. And therefore, without any contradiction to her self, may very well admit the observation of such customs, that having so much ground from Scripture, are recommended also by the early and general practice of the Christian Church. This, I say, she may very well do, but is by no means thereby obliged to receive all the traditions and customs of the *Roman Church*, for many of which nothing can be truly pleaded either from Scripture or antiquity, but very much against them from both.

L. This is very plain and satisfactory. Pray let us have his next question.

T. It

T. It is this, Can you make it appear to me how your Sectaries can with reason and sufficient ground condemn all the Catholicks that were so many ages before Luther and Calvin, for being no better than heathens, and convince me that by adhering to you I shall be more secure of my salvation, than if I joyn my self to them that have been held time out of mind, in most parts of the world, for the men that have the true and only saving Religion? What answer give you to this?

L. First I know no body that does thus condemn all Catholicks before Luther and Calvin. For as to those Christians in the first ages of the Church, who truly deserve the name of Catholicks, whether of the Roman Church or any other, we are so far from condemning, that we admire and applaud them; we approve of their Doctrine contain'd in the ancient Creeds, and do embrace and profess it; we honour their memory, and endeavour to imitate their example. But as those of the Roman Church in latter ages (whom he means, I suppose, by his Catholicks) though we do not say they are as bad as heathens, yet we do truly say that they have very much corrupted Christian Religion by false Doctrines and Superstitious usages: and therefore we think it a much safer way to salvation to adhere to the ancient certain truths of Christianity every where received, and to worship God in that pure and holy manner which our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles both taught and used, than to embrace those additions made by the Roman Church, which are no parts of true and saving Religion, nor have ever been so accounted by the generality of Christians. And though our ancestors might have some excuse from the state of this Church in their days, yet we their posterity should be utterly inexcusable, if now that our Church has so justly reformed her self from Popish corruptions, we should break off from her communion, and go over to the Church of Rome that hates to be reformed. This were to

add the guilt of Schism to that of Superstition.

T. Your answer is very clear and full, and may well enough serve for the solution of his fifth Query, which is to the same purpose with the former, viz. Can you make evident at least that in your little flock, or in Luther and Calvin their guides, more holiness and virtue was to be found than in the Catholicks? And that it is this little flock of yours not the Catholicks that go the narrow way that leads to life?

L. To this may easily be answered, as you have formerly instructed me, that though Luther and Calvin were learned and good men, who in their own times and places did much service for the Reformation of Religion, yet they never had authority in our Church, nor do we own them as our guides. The blessed Jesus is the Author of our Religion; and after him the holy Apostles were the teachers of it, being no other than Christianity it self, and consequently the true way to eternal happiness; even that narrow way of truth and holiness, which the whole flock of Christ in all ages hath acknowledged and walked in. But the Church of Rome (which may well enough be stiled the Popes little flock) hath peculiar Doctrines of its own, which she hath added to the common truths of Christianity, many of which Doctrines do apparently lead men to the broad way, even to looseness of life and manners, as hath been already shewn.

T. There needs nothing more be added to what you say, and therefore I shall proceed to his sixth and last question, viz. Can you shew me any miracles that ever were wrought in testimony of the truth of your Religion? Or that all the miracles which Catholicks shew to have been done in confirmation of their Religion, have been false, or were wrought by Beelzebub, any more than those which Christ did work in his life time?

L. I do well remember the answer that long since you gave to this, the summ of which was that since our Religion

Religion is that same holy Christian Religion (which was taught by our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles, all those miracles which they anciently wrought in confirmation of their Doctrine, do at this day confirm ours also, which being the same with theirs needs no new miracles for that purpose. For by those miracles of theirs (besides other weighty arguments) we are fully assured that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that he died for our sins, and rose again from the dead, with the rest of the Creed, wherein is briefly comprized the summ of our Belief, the chief articles of our Religion. And when our first Reformers rejected those Popish errors which had been added to these ancient Christian Doctrines, as they needed no extraordinary commission for this their reformation, no more did they need any miracles to confirm their commission. It was enough that they had authority from God, from the Church, and from their Prince, to preach the truths of the Gospel, and to reject all errors contrary thereto, and to remove those abuses which in later times had crept into the Church. But whilst they only preach'd that same Gospel, which had been abundantly confirmed already by mighty signs and wonders, they no more needed any new miracles, than if such errors and abuses had never been brought in. And as to those false Doctrines wherein Popery consists, such as the Popes Supremacy, Transubstantiation, &c. we do utterly deny that ever any true miracles were wrought in confirmation of them, whatever fine tales their Monks may tell us in their Legends. And for any to compare these their lying Legends, (so full of most ridiculous and prodigious stories) with the account that is given of the miracles done by our Saviour and his followers in the New Testament, is to be guilty of notorious impudence and blasphemy, and plainly tends to promote infidelity and Atheism.

T. Your censure is very just, and your answer solid and satisfactory, as are the rest you have given.

By all which it appears that your Author had little cause to say, *that they who ask the resolution of these doubts from their Ministers, if they have any light of reason, will find how much they are deluded.* For blessed be God, I hope many of our people are so well instructed, that they will not be imposed upon, nor much puzzled with such captious Questions as these. Especially whilst they seek to their Ministers for a resolution of their doubts, by the grace of God they shall be secured from the delusions of Popish Emisseries, who go about seeking whom they may deceive.

C H A P. III.

An answer to some Propositions said to be unanswerable by Protestants.

IN the next place I find your Author, at his Scholars request, furnishing him with some *unanswerable Propositions*, (as he vainly stiles them) against Protestants. Of these he names eight, taken, as he says, from *Costerus* the Jesuit, who therewith (if we may believe him) put all the ablest Ministers of *Germany* and the *Low-countries* to their wits ends. Which if it were so, one would wonder that there were any Protestant Ministers or people left in those Countries, and that they were not all long since driven out of their wits and their Religion into Popery. But had they never used those terrible arguments of fire and sword, Prisons and Inquisition, no body would much fear their pregnant arguments, difficult questions, or unanswerable Propositions. The two former we have already dispatched, let us now survey the last, in which

which I am apt to think we shall still find a tedious repetition of many the same things that we have already often heard; which if it be so, we shall more briefly pass over them.

L. Probably you will find it so. However I think we shall sooner have finished, if you please to give the answer your self to these his Propositions which I shall exactly recite to you.

T. That shall be as you will: But I hope you are not moved with his formidable title of Unanswerable Propositions.

L. I have no reason I am sure, if they be like his unanswerable Questions, in which there proved little or no difficulty.

T. Their common way is to make up the want of good Reason with great words and loud noise; producing only thin fallacies and empty sophistry, whilst they talk big of Infallible Evidence and clear Demonstration. But let us hear these dreadful Propositions I beseech you.

L. His first is this, Never since the Apostles times, till Luther began his new Doctrine in the year 1517, was any man found in the whole World, who did in all things consent with either Lutherans, Calvinists, Anabaptists, or other Sectaries opinions. Nor shall ever any of the Sectaries prove the Apostles or Evangelists to have been of the Lutheran, Calvinistical, or any other new Sect. Whence follows, that Luther and the rest have no Faith at all, but only a new fancied invention, which they adorn with the name of Faith, and that they are the men of whom the Scripture in several places affirms that there will come in the latter times false Prophets.

T. As to Lutherans or Calvinists, we own neither one name or other (as has been often said) nor are we

we concerned to vindicate any particular opinion of this Man or that; though I reckon the Doctrine of both, as to the substance of it, to be sound and good, at least so far as it agrees with that of our Church, which only we are obliged to answer for, and easily we may (though he revile us also as Sectaries) since it is no other than the same Christian Doctrine which is contain'd in the Gospel, and summ'd up in the Creed; and this let him confute if he can, or attempt it if he dare. And in this Doctrine we are sure both the Apostles of old, with the Catholick Church in their Age and in all Ages since, do fully consent with us. Nor was it any new Doctrine that our Reformers brought in. No, but whilst they rejected Popish Novelties, they retain'd those truths of Christianity which were as old as the first institution of Religion. What means he then by saying that none of the Ancients consent with us in all things? In every little opinion it's scarce likely there were or ever will be two men in the World that do exactly agree. No such agreement I am sure is to be found amongst the Divines of the *Roman* Church. But as sure it is that we agree with the Apostles and Ancient Churches in all things material and substantial, in all points of Faith necessary to Salvation. For we embrace the same Holy Scriptures and the same Creeds which they did. What means he again by saying that the Apostles were not of the *Lutheran* or *Calvinistical* Sect? What, that they were not followers of *Luther* or *Calvin*? They were not like indeed; but it's enough, I hope, if *Luther* and *Calvin* were followers of the Apostles. Thus, what if he should say that the Apostles were not of the Church of *England*? Is it not sufficient that our Church embraces the same Faith which the Apostles planted in all places where they came? Wherefore we
may

may with great reason conclude, contrary to his extravagant and most uncharitable inferences, that we have the true Christian Faith in our Church, and not any new-fangled invention, &c. If the Apostles Creed be a Summary of the true Faith, I am sure we have it, since we do most heartily embrace this Creed and those Holy Scriptures whence it's taken, and therefore we are none of those false Prophets foretold in Scripture: For whilst we keep close to God's Word as the rule of our Faith, we are safe enough from deserving any such charge. But how will they of the *Romish* Church acquit themselves from it, whilst they have brought in many devices of their own, to which the Apostles and Primitive Christians were meer strangers, and therefore cannot be said to consent with *Papists* therein? Such are their Doctrines of Purgatory, Transubstantiation, &c. Such are their customs of praying in an unknown Tongue; having private Masses where the Priest only receives in their publick Assemblies; their half-Communion, giving only the Bread to the people when they do Communicate, &c. None of these things were anciently taught or used in the Church, and some of them but lately established amongst themselves. These therefore we may justly say are new-fangled inventions, devised of their own Brain, contrary to Holy Scriptures: And they who broach and maintain them are in this respect false Teachers, and probably some of those who are foretold in Scripture; at least they and their false Doctrines are condemned by it, and that's enough for our purpose.

L. *It is so indeed; and enough have you said to weaken and refute this his first Proposition. If the rest have no more strength, they are far from deserving that great title he gives them. I shall rehearse the next if you please.*

T. Pre-

T. Presently you shall, only take notice from what hath been said, how plain the Answer is to that captious Question of theirs, *Where was your Religion before Luther?* Where was it? Even there whereever the Gospel was received; whereever the Christian Doctrine was own'd: for that is our Religion, and nothing but that. It was therefore in the Primitive Church that was planted by the Apostles; and in the whole Catholick Church in all succeeding Ages. Our Religion was both in the East and the West, even in the *Roman* Church it self. For we grant they still retain'd the Christian Faith, they kept, and do still keep the Apostles Creed, though they have added several new Articles to it, and that especially in their Council of *Trent*, which appear'd not in the World quite so soon as *Luther*. Now, the truly Catholick, Ancient, Christian Faith we receive; but their new-coin'd Articles we reject: So that before the Reformation, our Religion was in their Church as Gold in a heap of Dirt, or (as one long since exprest it) as the pure Flower amongst the Bran, or as Corn among Tares. And by the Reformation we only wash'd away this Dirt, sifted out the Bran, and plucked up the Tares: But the old Religion, the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles remains pure and entire.

L. But say they, where did the Apostles teach that there is no Purgatory, no Transubstantiation, &c? Yet thus the Protestants teach, and therefore they consent not with the Apostles.

T. Yes certainly but they do: for (as I have formerly told you) we therefore say there is no Purgatory, &c. because the Apostles say no such things, which be sure they would have done, had they been true, since they are such weighty and material points as the Church of *Rome* now accounts them. What
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the Apostles taught that we receive; what they taught not we refuse, as knowing they were faithful in delivering all that they received of the Lord. Judge then which of us consents most with the Apostles, we who receive all their Doctrines, but reject what they never taught, or they who teach these new Doctrines, which neither the Apostles nor any of their first followers ever delivered, nor were they for some Hundred years after generally profest so much as in their own Church. Yea, these Novelties were never directly and formally established as Articles of Faith, and made necessary for all men of their Communion to believe till in these latter Ages; some of them, as I take it, not till the very Council of *Trent* (not yet an Hundred and fifty years since) which they call a General Council, though packt up of Bishops of their own Sect; and the major part the Popes own creatures, who used all the foul arts imaginable to carry things according to his humour, as is plainly to be seen in the History of that Council, written by some of their own Church. Now in respect of these Articles in which Popery chiefly consists, we may with great reason retort the question, and demand, Where was your Religion before the Council of *Trent*? And were the Apostles of the same opinion with these *Trent* Fathers? Compare their Creeds together, and it will easily appear. Yea, compare that of *Trent* with any other of the old Creeds, such as the *Nicene* or *Constantinopolitan*, and it will easily appear what additions they have made to the ancient Faith; whereas our Church receives those very same Creeds, without addition or diminution. To conclude this, though we readily grant their Popish Errors to have been before our Reformation from them (for they could not be cast out before they were brought in) yet the great truths

206 *An Answer to some Propositions said to be*

truths of our Religion were taught and received in the Church, some Ages before those Errors were ever heard of. Our Religion then did not first appear in *Luther's* days, when the Reformation was wrought, but is as old as since the time of Christ and his Apostles, being nothing else but pure Christianity reformed from the errors and abuses of *Poper*y. These things I have already oft mentioned, but could not well avoid the repetition of them, on occasion of this his first Proposition, which by this time you see is far enough from being unanswerable. Now let us hear the second.

L. It cannot be proved that the Religion and Faith of the Holy *Roman* Catholick Church hath been any way changed in any Article that belongs to the Religion, by any Pope, Council, or Catholick Bishop: nor can any of them be produced that have changed it. But it is rather proved that the very same Faith hath remain'd entire and inviolate from the times of the Apostles to this very day, and by continual succession (or from hand to hand as it were) is come to our hands. Whence is manifestly gathered, that it is the very same Faith which the Apostles taught, and therefore the same that they learned from Christ their Master in his School.

T. The Answer which I have just now given to his first Proposition doth wholly take off the force of this second also. For pray consider, we do not charge those of the Church of *Rome* with directly changing the Articles of the Christian Faith: for we grant they still retain the Apostles Creed, wherein that Faith is briefly comprized, and the Holy Scriptures where it is more largely taught: But our great charge against them is their adding to this old Faith new Articles of their own devising, some of them utterly uncertain,
some

some notoriously false ; which yet they impose as of absolute necessity to be believed in order to Salvation, even as much as the Apostles Creed it self. And for the vindication of these Novelties, they give very corrupt and false interpretations of the ancient Articles, and of the holy Scriptures themselves, such as the first Christian Writers never gave. Thus for instance, they would have the Catholick Church mentioned in the Creed to signifie the *Roman* Church, and so to comprehend only those who acknowledg the Bishop of *Rome* to be Head of the Church, and Christ's Vicar upon Earth, whereas none of the Ancients did ever thus explain this Article: So that by their corrupt glosses they do in some instances very much change the Doctrine whilst they retain the Words. But as to these novel additions which they would thrust upon us, we do utterly deny that they were ever taught by Christ or his Apostles, nor consequently could be delivered down from them successively to this present Age. Nay our Learned Writers shew as to many of them the very time when they were introduced, by what Degrees and what Arts it was done, and with what difficulties and oppositions they met. They name the very Pope who first obtain'd the Title of Supreme Bishop of the Universal Church ; they name the Council where Image-worship was first established; and after that when Transubstantiation and the Popes Power of Deposing Princes were Decreed, &c. Though (as our Writers commonly urge) it is a most foolish and ridiculous thing, when we demonstrate the Errors of their Church, for them to say there are none, because we cannot shew the precise time when they were first brought in. As if when the Tares were plainly seen in the field, the Servant should have denied there were any, because no body could exactly tell when they were

were Sown, it being done while the Master slept. It's enough that we can tell the time long after the Apostles, when their erroneous Doctrines were not received in the Church, and that proves them to be no part of the Ancient Faith of Christians, which has been always and every where received in the Catholick Church. Nay, as to one most corrupt custom of their Church, that of taking the Cup from the Laity, when they first established it by a Decree, *viz.* in the Council of *Constance*, not three hundred years ago, they themselves do there acknowledg that it was permitted in the Primitive Church; yet it now seem'd fit to the Church of *Rome* (for what reason you must not enquire) to order the contrary to that primitive practice. But to conclude, That faith which indeed the Apostles learn'd in Christs School, and from him taught to their followers, and which from them hath been transmitted from one age to another down to this present time, this we do most readily own and imbrace, even that faith which is delivered in the holy Scriptures, and comprized in the Creed: and so far as they of *Rome* do acknowledg this faith, we have no quarrel with them. But the new Articles decreed by late Councils of their own, by no means can we admit, not a syllable of them being mention'd in the ancient Creeds, nor can they be proved by the Holy Scriptures, but many of them are directly contrary thereto, as hath been already shewn, and will yet further appear in my answer to his following argument, to which you may proceed.

L. His third Proposition is, *That it cannot be shew'd that either the Ceremonies, Sacraments, or any Doctrine of their Church contains any thing contrary to holy Scripture; but rather their learned Doctors clearly teach and demonstrate all the foresaid things to be plainly*
consonant

consonant to Holy Writ. Such be these Words, *This is my Body, and others.* Whence it follows, that Lutherans, Calvinists, and other Sectaries have ungroundedly and without reason separated themselves from the Roman Church: That also they who withdraw themselves from the Catholick Churches bosom, can give no reason why they turn rather to the Lutherans, than to the Calvinists, Anabaptists, or such other Hereticks.

T. That the Church of Rome hath brought in Customs contrary to the Holy Scripture, is very evident from that instance I gave under the last Head, viz. their taking away the Cup from the people at the Communion, contrary to our Saviours own institution and practice, who gave the Cup as well as the Bread to his Apostles, requiring them all to drink of it; and this not as Apostles meerly, but as they were his Disciples. And he enjoyn'd them to *do this* hereafter *in remembrance of him*; and consequently to give both the Bread and the Wine to all Christians that should come to the Lords Table. And so the Apostle Paul expressly requires, *Let a man examine himself* (every man that is, whether of the Clergy or Laity) *and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that Cup.* According to the Apostle then, every Man that is bound to examine and prepare himself for this Holy Sacrament ought to drink of the Cup as well as eat of the Bread. And thus it was generally used in the Primitive Church by their own confession, as you have heard. And yet in these latter ages, out of I know not what pretended reverence for the Cup, no body must partake of it ordinarily but the Priest that consecrates, which is, I say, most expressly contrary to the Scripture. But for their excuse, they have devised, forsooth, a fine Doctrine of Concomitancy, which (if you will do them the small favour to grant that of

Transubstantiation to be true) they think well enough solves all. For they tell you that the Blood so accompanies the Flesh, that he who receives one, partakes of the other also; and therefore whilst the people take the Flesh under the species of Bread, this may very well serve without taking the Wine too. But if this be a good reason, Why then need the consecrating Priest take the Wine? Or why need our Saviour have appointed both Bread and Wine to be made use of in this his Holy Supper? Here then you have a plain instance of their practising contrary to the Scripture in so weighty a matter as the Administring the Holy Communion.

To this may be joyn'd their custom of private Masses or Communions (if that be not a contradiction) the Priest himself many times receiving alone, and none of the people who are present partaking with him; contrary to the first institution of this Holy Sacrament, and to the very nature and design of it as it is a Communion, and contrary also to the practice of the Primitive Church.

To these may a great many more easily be added, of which we have formerly taken notice: Such as having their Prayers in an unknown Tongue contrary to the Apostles direction, 1 *Cor.* 14. Their Worshiping of Saints and Angels, which is forbidden in all those places that command us to Worship God alone, in the name of Jesus Christ our only Mediator, and most expressly, *Col.* 2. 18. *Rev.* 22. 9. Also their Worship of Images and of the Host contrary to the second Commandment.

And for an instance of their false Doctrines (many of which we have often mentioned) we need go no further than that palpable one of Transubstantiation, which he mentions as agreeable to Scripture that says,

This

This is my body. But how little these words make for his purpose we have before shewn, and that their plain meaning is, This is the Sacrament of my Body; or the representation and commemoration of it, and the way of conveying the benefits that come by it; according to the constant use of the like expressions in the matter of Sacraments; even as the Paschal Lamb is called the Passover, of which it was only a solemn Memorial. But that the natural substance of Bread (and consequently of Wine) remains after Consecration, we have proved from the Apostle who again and again calls it so, *1 Cor. 11.* How then can he say that without ground we separate from the *Romish* Church? Since if there were nothing else to be blamed, this alone were sufficient reason to keep out of their Communion, since in order to it they require our belief of a Doctrine most apparently false, namely that of Transubstantiation; and enjoin a practice founded upon this Doctrine, which is notoriously sinful, *viz.* the Worship of the Consecrated Elements, as if they were now turned into the substance of Christ's Body and Blood; yea, into whole Christ, both as to his Divine and Humane Nature. Now they themselves (as you have heard) do grant, that if there was no such change made by Consecration, this Worship would be idolatrous, and therefore we being upon good grounds, assured that no such change there is, do utterly abhor the very thoughts of such Idolatrous worship; and do believe our selves bound in Conscience to Almighty God, to undergo a Thousand deaths rather than be guilty of it; yea, though we lived in Popish Countries. But besides this, we here in *England* owe no manner of obedience to the Bishop of *Rome*, nor are under any obligation to forsake the Communion of our own Church for that of the *Romish*;

but should be guilty of that hainous sin of Schism by so doing, as the *Papists* amongst us are at this day, of which more in another place.

As to what he talks, that they who go from their Church can give no reason why they should rather turn to *Luther* than to the *Calvinists*, &c. it concerns not us in the least, who neither turn to the one or the other; but continue in Communion with our own Church in which we were Baptized; and live in obedience to our own Rulers in Church and State, whom God hath set over us: Nor do I discern by what reason he makes this silly inference; nor yet for what purpose. But let me hear his next Argument.

L. *It cannot be proved that ever at any time were admitted any Priests that were not first duly consecrated by Bishops: Wherefore we rightly infer, that all Lutheran Ministers, Calvinists, or any other Sects, not Consecrated according to the old custom of the Holy Church, are far both from the name and reality of the Divine Priesthood; and so that in their Cene or Supper (as they call it) they give but a meer piece of Bread, as also that they have no power to Absolve from Sins, but send away people as entangled and defiled with Sin as they were when they came to them.*

T. As to this Argument, we of the Church of *England* are nothing concerned in it, since our Priests receive Ordination from Bishops, and therefore have as full authority for the exercise of their Ministerial function as those of any Christian Church in the World. Some other Reformed Churches also do embrace Episcopal Government. As for such who want it, we shall not enter into a dispute concerning the validity of their Orders: But this I think we may safely assert, that if the people be duly qualified for the Lord's Supper (as *St. Paul* himself calls it, 1 *Cor.* 11. 20.) by a
firm

firm belief of the Gospel, and sincere love and obedience to our Blessed Saviour, they shall not want the benefits that are promised to worthy Communicants, through any defect or irregularity in the Ordination of their Ministers. And if they do truly repent of their sins and forsake them, they shall for Christ's sake obtain forgiveness from God, though never any Priest should give them Absolution. But on the other hand, our Writers have shewn, that according to the common principle received in the *Romish Church*, *That the truth of Sacraments depends upon the intention of the Priest*, the people cannot be certain at any time that they have true Sacraments; no, nor whether he be a true Priest that Administers them. But I shall trouble you with nothing more on this Argument.

L. There is no need, since it reaches not our Church in the least; I shall therefore proceed to the fifth, which is this: *It cannot be found in the whole Holy Scripture, that nothing is to be believed but what clearly and expressly is contained, written in the same; whence follows the ruine and overthrow of the ground-work on which Lutherans, Calvinists, and other Sectaries rely, when they affirm that nothing is to be believed but what is expressly set down in Holy Writ.*

T. I wonder who says so: Every thing is to be believed that has sufficient evidence of its truth, whether it be in Scripture or not. But this we say (and this I suppose he means to argue against) that nothing is of necessity to be believed in order to Salvation, but what is contain'd in Holy Scripture. Which in effect is the same as to say, that the Holy Scripture contains all necessary articles of Faith, so that no Church on Earth has any power to coin and impose new ones not revealed in the Scripture, which, I say, acquaints us with all things needful to Salvation. And this I am sure is

plainly enough taught in the Scripture it self, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. The Holy Scriptures they then enjoy'd, viz. the Writings of the *Old-Testament*, are said to be able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus, being profitable to all things necessary thereto, as you may there find it fully exprest. So Joh. 20. 31. *These things are written that you might believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you might have life through his name.* So that if we believe in Jesus Christ according to all that is written of him in the Gospel, this Faith (if it produce Obedience) will certainly procure everlasting Life. And indeed our own reason may well tell us, that since the very design of the Holy Scripture is to reveal to us the whole Will of God in order to our Eternal happiness, surely there is revealed in them all that is necessary to this end. Can we imagine that those Holy Men who committed to Writing the Doctrine of our Blessed Saviour, with an account of his Life and Death, his Resurrection and Ascension, &c. that they would omit any thing which was necessary for us to know and believe in order to our Salvation, when they wrote these things purposely that we might be saved? Especially if we consider that they have given us a very large account of things, much more than was of absolute necessity: And in such abundance would they leave out things more necessary than those they have Recorded? The necessary Articles of Faith are comprized in a little room, and have generally been thought to be comprehended in the Apostles Creed. This was the judgement of the Primitive Fathers, and many Learned men of the Church of Rome have acknowledged as much. Now the Articles of this Creed, I hope, are all contained in the Holy Scripture, being there both largely exprest, and frequently

quently inculcated. So that the ground-work of the Reformation remains firm and unshaken, viz. that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to Salvation, and therefore those new Articles which the Roman Church hath invented besides, yea, contrary to these Scriptures, ought by no means to be admitted.

L. The Doctrine of our Church concerning the Sufficiency of Holy Scripture seems very plain, and the inference you make from it clear and natural: But the Sixth Argument will give you occasion to discourse further on this Subject. For my Author says it will be for confirmation of his former Proposition, and thus it runs: *We would fain have Luther, Calvin, and other Sectaries shew where they find written that the Gospel according to St. Matthew is Holy Scripture rather than the Gospel of Nicodemus, which seeing they cannot do, and yet they believe too the Gospel of St. Matthew as to Holy Scripture, they must needs confess that they believe some things which are not contain'd in Scripture.*

T. His former Argument truly stands in much need of confirmation, but is like to receive little from this which he brings to strengthen and enforce it. Since if we grant him the whole of it, I cannot see that it will do any service to his cause, or any prejudice to ours: For who ever denied, but that we believe some, yea, many things which are not contain'd in Holy Scripture? We believe there is such a Country as *France*, and such a City in it as *Paris*, though there be nothing of them in Scripture: Or which is nearer to our purpose, we believe there was such a Man in the World as *Julius Caesar*, and that the Book which goes under his name, called, *Cæsars Commentaries*, was indeed written by him: This we believe on account of the current Tradition and constant opinion of the World from his time down to this present Age, there

being no ground to doubt of the truth of it, since all circumstances concur to render it credible. Even thus, to come to the Case in hand, we believe the Gospel according to St. *Matthew*, and the other Sacred Books to be Written by those persons whose names they bear in the Title as Authors of them, because this hath been the constant judgement of the whole Church of God from the very Age wherein these Books were Written, to this present time. And on the other hand, we have good reason to reject a Book pretended to be written by *Nicodemus*, because none such was admitted by the Primitive Church, which must needs have known of it if any such Book there had been. For this reason it was never own'd as Canonical by the Catholick Church in any Age since; nor therefore do we now receive it as such. Where now I beseech you lies the strength of this his mighty Argument?

L. I confess I am so far from discerning the strength of it, that I do not well understand what he aims at by it.

T. Ple tell you then in a few words: He would by his way of arguing force us to acknowledge, that Holy Scripture does not contain all things necessary to Salvation; but that there are some Traditions of the Church to be received with equal reverence and esteem, as particularly that such and such Books are Canonical Scripture, others not; and that it is on account of the authority of the Church of Rome that these Traditions are to be received; and therefore, lastly, they hence infer that all other Traditions which their Church proposes to us, are by the same reason to be received without doubting or disputing. This is their common way of arguing, and this Author here and in other places insinuates the same. But
 now

now to shew further how little of force or solid reason there is in this smooth and subtle talk, pray consider with me seriously two or three things which I shall suggest to you.

L. *I promise you my most diligent attention.*

T. (1) Then we must ever carefully distinguish betwixt the tradition or delivery of the holy Scripture it self from one generation to another, and those other traditions, whether Doctrines or customes beside the holy Scripture, which yet are by the *Roman* Church made of equal authority with it: the former we own, but not the latter. For, we most readily grant that there hath been a tradition of the holy Scripture (as that which was written by such and such men inspired by the Holy Ghost) from one age to another ever since the time of its first writing, and so hath it been brought down to us in these days. And those Books which the Primitive Church embraced as thus Sacred and Canonical, and so delivered them to succeeding ages, these do we embrace with all reverence and submission, as the rule both of faith and manners, containing the whole will of God in order to our salvation. But then for this very reason do we utterly deny that there are any other traditions of equal necessity to salvation, which are not contain'd in these holy Scriptures.

(2) Note well that though the Church of God hath been a most faithful preserver of these holy Scriptures, and hath carefully transmitted them from one generation to another, yet it is not the Church which gives authority to the Scriptures; as if she by any power in her could make that to be the word of God which is not so, or unmake that which is indeed so. No, but the Church received for the word of God that which was delivered by holy men inspired by the Holy Ghost,
who

who gave full evidence of this their inspiration both by the nature of that Doctrine which they delivered, and by the mighty miracles which God enabled them to work for the attesting the truth of this Doctrine both preached and written. Now the Church which was in being in the first ages, when these holy men committed their Doctrine to writing, was a most competent witness of their writing those Books which go under their names, and accordingly received them as the Sacred writings of such persons divinely inspired, and so convey'd them to the next generation. Thus the *Jewish* Church received the Books of *Moses* and the Prophets; and thus the Primitive Christian Church received the writings of the Evangelists and the Apostles, as also the Books of the Old Testament, both upon the tradition of the *Jewish* Church, and also upon the authority of our Blessed Saviour, who own'd and approved of the same. And thus the Books both of the Old Testament and the New have ever since, by the good Providence of God, been preserved in the Christian Church, and handed down from one generation to another, and so shall be, we need not question, to the end of the world. And this same tradition of the Church whereby these holy Books are distinguished from all others, and carefully delivered by the former age to the next following, this we give all just regard to, and do freely grant that this is of singular use for our information what Books belong to the Canon of Scripture, what not; and by this tradition we learn that this Book was written by this man under whose name it goes, and another by that; as for instance, this by St. *Matthew*, that by St. *Mark*, &c. But whilst the Church thus bears testimony to the Scripture, to which testimony we give all due regard, she does not, I say, give authority to it. For there is a vast difference
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betwixt these two. It's the Kings hand and seal which gives *authority* to a writing, containing, suppose, a grant of this or that priviledg; but some credible persons, his Secretaries or others who were witnesses to his signing or sealing of that writing, may give *testimony* to it, and so procure it to be own'd as authentick. Thus the holy Scriptures which are recommended to us by the *testimony* of the Church, derive their *authority* from God only, who hath set to his seal that they are true, as I have said, both by the miracles that were wrought to confirm the Doctrine contained in them, by the holiness of that Doctrine, and many other circumstances relating thereto.

(3) Yet again take notice, when I say we give such regard to the testimony of the *Church*, I do not hereby mean the *Roman Church* as distinct from all others: no, by no means, but the truly Catholick, even the whole Christian Church, whether of the East or West, the North or South. For this hath been the constant tradition of the whole Church in all ages ever since the Apostles, that these Books were written by men divinely inspired, and were given to be the rule of our faith and manners. (If some doubt was for a while made concerning a Book or two, yet when these doubts were removed, they were received into the Canon with the rest.) And this hath been the opinion not only of the Catholick Church, but of most Hereticks and Schisimaticks also, whose testimony here may be of great force, whilst they could not but own the authority of Scripture, even though they were confuted by it. Yea to this I may add the acknowledgment of Heathens themselves, or of *Jews* who lived in those times that the Books which go under the names of St. *Matthew*, St. *Paul*, &c. were indeed written by them. Thus we have a general current tradition,

tradition, not only of the *Roman* but of all other Churches in the world, that such and such Books belong to the Canon of Scripture; and this is commonly granted by Hereticks and Schismatics themselves. And even Heathens and Infidels who wrote against the Christian Religion, have own'd these Books to be written by those persons whose names they bear, who were eminent in that age for the propagating of our holy Religion. So that we have a much more famous and uncontrollable tradition for it, than that the Books which are said to be written by *Tally, Virgil, &c.* are indeed their works, which I think no body makes any doubt of.

Lastly, from what hath been said, you may infer that though we give just regard to this current tradition of the Universal Church, by which these holy Books are convey'd to us as Canonical Scripture, yet it does not in the least follow that we are therefore obliged to embrace all those Doctrines and practices of the *Roman* Church which she would impose upon us under the venerable name of Traditions of the Catholick Church; whilst they are for the most part only the private opinions and usages of their own Church, many of them of very late date and expressly contrary to the judgment and practice of the Christian Church in the first and purest ages of it, as well as to the holy Scripture it self. So that there is no more reason for our embracing these traditions of the *Romish* Church than there was for our Saviour and his Apostles to receive all the traditions of the *Jewish* Church, by many of which they had made void the Commandments of God. After all then, Tradition rightly understood makes nothing against but apparently for us. For if there be any other Tradition as universal as this of the Books of Holy Scripture,
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our Church readily embraces it, as before has been exprest. And we will own that the summ of our Faith is brought down by Tradition, viz. in the very form of baptizing in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and more largely in the Apostles Creed wherein this form is explain'd. We grant also that at first the Christian Faith was thus planted by the Preaching of the Gospel before the Books of the New Testament were written. But now this our Faith is most plainly and fully contained in these Sacred Books, whereas the additional Doctrines of the *Romish* Church are no more brought down by Universal Tradition, than they are contain'd in the Holy Scripture, which we assert to be the only sure and perfect rule of Faith and manners, and upon all accounts much more fit to be so than bare tradition, which they of the Church of *Rome* so vainly boast of. But for your further satisfaction in this point, I shall refer you to a most solid and rational discourse concerning the *Rule of Faith*, done by a Reverend Divine of our Church, and shall now hasten to what remains.

L. His seventh Argument is this: *It cannot be shewn that for these 1500 years there hath been any Catholick, who held that the Pope of Rome was Antichrist, or that did revile and rail at the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or lastly that did blame Invocation of Saints, the usual praying for the Dead, and such like works of piety belonging to Faith and Religion, which the whole world hath laudably practised and revered for 1500 years. Wherefore it is most evident that Lutherans, Calvinists, &c. do most wickedly when they dare revile such things.*

T. These points have all of them been sufficiently discust already. I have told you how one of their Popes did assert him to be the forerunner of Antichrist, who should assume the title of Universal Bishop,
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which his Successors have now a long time done whilst they claim a Supremacy over the Universal Church. But which is more material, I have shewn how contrary the Doctrines and practices wherein Popery consists are to the nature and design of true Christianity, and therefore may well enough be stiled Antichristian. I have shewn that there is not properly a Sacrifice in the Communion, but a commemoration of Christs Sacrifice only once offered; and have also manifested that there is neither Scripture, Reason, nor good Antiquity to be pleaded on behalf of that Invocation of Saints, and praying for the Dead, which are now used in the Church of *Rome*. As for railing and reviling I would not be guilty of it. 'Tis enough to disprove their errors and renounce them, to shew the falshood and mischiefs of them, and this I hope is not to be accounted railing. In a word, whatever he pretends, no Christian Writers for four or five hundred years after our Saviour did assert the Bishop of *Rome* to be Christs Vicar on Earth, and under him supreme Governour of the whole Christian Church. Nor did they teach or practise such Invocation of Saints, and praying for the Dead, as are now in use amongst Papists. And upon this account our Church hath with great reason and religion reformed her self from these and the like corrupt innovations.

L. Doubtless she has so, and the weakness of his Arguments do the more assure me of it. His last is nothing else but a repetition of what he has often said, viz. That the first Authors of Christian faith in Germany, Spain, England, &c. have acknowledged and brought in no other faith, nor have our forefathers received any other Faith than the Holy Catholick Roman, which self-same we have received from our forefathers, and have hitherto conserved. Whence he concludes that *Sectaries* (his common name for

for all Protestants) have invented new opinions of their own, and presented them to the people as a certain rule of Faith, and the pure word of God; and that consequently they are liable to the curse denounced against those who preach a new Gospel, nor can ever hope to please God and attain eternal happiness, being destitute of the right faith; whereupon he advises his Scholar, considering the nearness of death, and the eternity of Hell torments, to prefer the salvation of his Soul before all sublunary things.

T. So far his advice is good: but 'tis a wonder that any man who pretends to have a regard to his own or others souls, and believe there is an Hell provided for such as make and love a lye, dare be guilty of such notorious forgeries and calumnies as are contain'd in this his charge against Protestants, as if they had propos'd some new opinion of their own devising for a rule of Faith, whilst it's well known that we make the holy Word of God to be the only certain rule of it. And even he himself a little before accused us for saying that nothing is to be believed but what is contained in Gods Word, that is, nothing as necessary to salvation, as I have before granted and proved. This he calls the ground-work of the Reformation, and we do not deny it. And that same Christian Faith which is contain'd in these holy Scriptures at large, and briefly summ'd up in the Creed, is that same Faith which the first planters of Christian Religion taught and established in our own and other Countries; and this self-same do we retain to this day. If then the Apostles Creed, or the *Nicene* Creed (as we commonly call it) be a new invention, so is our faith; but if these contain an Abridgement of the truly ancient Catholick Faith, then his charging us with new inventions, is a most false and malicious slander; so far are we from it, that a great reason why we reject their

Doctrines

Doctrines of the Supremacy and Infallibility of their Pope or Church with the rest of their Errors, is because these are new inventions of their own, and no part of the ancient Faith. Wherefore instead of pronouncing the heavy sentence of damnation upon others (which is true Popish charity) it behoves them well to consider how they can exempt themselves from the curse threatned to those who preach another Gospel than the Apostles did; which in some sort they do, whilst they impose the Traditions of their Church (of which the Apostles never spoke a syllable) as of equal certainty and authority with the Holy Scriptures themselves. But I am tired with his Arguments, which still lead me so oft to repeat the same things. Though I shall not repent it, if it any way tend to give you more satisfaction.

L. I thank God I am well satisfied with your discourse, and am now fully convinced that there is small strength in these his Arguments, which he pretends to be such pregnant and unanswerable things. But after all, there remains something which he calls an evident demonstration that the Roman Catholick Church hath been and still is the true Church, which I shall desire you to take into examination.

T. Yes very willingly, and I doubt not but we shall soon find how little it deserves the name of a demonstration. Though if it be possible for him to produce any thing that has an appearance of truth and reason, sure he will now do it in the last place, that it may leave the greater impression upon his Reader. Let us hear then what he says.

CHAP. IV.

An Answer to a pretended Demonstration, That the Roman Church is the true Catholick Church.

L. *THIS Demonstration which he so much boasts of, is taken, he says, from one Dr. Bailly, who it seems revolted from our Church to that of Rome, and thus it runs, It will not be denied but that the Church of Rome was once a most excellent flourishing Mother-Church. This Church could not cease to be such, but she must fall either by Apostasie, Heresie or Schism.*

(1) Apostasie is a renouncing not only the Faith of Christ but the very name and title to Christianity. No man will say that ever the Church of *Rome* fell thus.

(2) Heresie is an adhesion to some private or singular opinion or error in Faith, contrary to the general approved Doctrine of the Church. If the Church of *Rome* did ever adhere to any singular or new opinion disagreeable to the common received Doctrine of the Christian world, I pray you satisfie me to these particulars: 1. By what General Council was she condemn'd? 2. Or which of the Fathers wrote against her? 3. Or by what authority was she otherwise reprov'd? for it seems to me a thing very incongruous, that so great a Church should be condemn'd by every one that has a mind to condemn her.

(3) Schism is a departure or a division from the unity of the Church, whereby that bond and communion held with some former Church is broken and dissolved. If ever the Church of *Rome* divided it self by schism from any other body of faithful Christians,

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brake communion or went forth from the society of any Elder Church, I pray satisfie me to these particulars, whose company did she leave? From whom did she go forth? Where was the true Church which she did forsake? For it appears a little strange to me that a Church should be accounted Schismatical, when there cannot be assign'd another Church different from her (which from age to age hath continued visible) from which she departed. Hence he infers, That the Church of *Rome* is the only true Church that leads to an eternity of bliss.

T. This indeed they commonly boast of as an unanswerable demonstration, which they often scatter abroad in papers for the deluding of silly people. Now though I see nothing in it but what has already been answered again and again, yet for your fuller satisfaction, Consider, (1) suppose that we should grant his whole argument, and every word in it to be true, yet will it do little service to their cause, nor will by any means yield that inference he would draw from it, viz. that the Church of *Rome* is the only true Church, and therefore to her communion we must betake our selves, leaving the Church of *England*. if ever we hope for salvation. For pray what if we should grant (which yet he will never be able to prove) that the Church of *Rome* is at this day as true and sound and flourishing a Church as we own it once to have been, and should yield that it never fell by Apostasie, Heresie, or Schism, what follows hence I beseech you? What, that she is the only true Church, and the whole Catholick Church? No, by no means, but only that she ought to be look'd upon as a sound part of the Catholick Church, and therefore that her members, viz. the Christians of that Diocess ought to live in strict fellowship with her, and all other neighbouring Churches

ches ought to give her due respect in maintaining such communion with her as sister-Churches are capable of holding one with another. But it does not, I say, in the least follow, that she is the supreme Mistress and Governess of all other Churches, and therefore that all Christians in the world must render subjection to her and her Bishop, otherwise they are to be look'd upon as no members of the Catholick Church, nor at present in a capacity of salvation. For such a supreme Mistress as this she never was when in her best and purest state, nor therefore ought she to be esteemed so at this day; neither do we of this Church owe obedience to her, nor ought we to leave our own Church for her sake or at her command.

L. I cannot see how his argument proves us at all obliged thereto, nor consequently how it reaches his purpose.

T. That it does not will still appear plainer, if instead of Rome you name any other ancient Church, suppose that of Jerusalem, which was once very glorious and flourishing, and deserved above all others to be stiled a Mother-Church; now suppose that at this day it remain'd as sound and good as ever it was, and (to use his language) that it never fell by Apostasie, Heresie or Schism; pray would it hence follow that all other Churches, and particularly this of England, must therefore yield subjection to the Church of Jerusalem? That our Bishops must pay homage to the Bishop of that Church, owning their dependance upon him, and living in obedience to him? And if they should refuse to do thus, must our people therefore forsake their own Bishops and Clergy, and withdraw from the Churches where they officiate, and entertain Bishops or Priests that are sent over to us from Jerusalem, and run into corners with them for the worship

of God? Surely there is not the least reason for any of this; and not a whit more is there for our being thus subject to the Bishop of *Rome*, or for our receiving and joyning with the Priests which are sent over to us by his authority. There never was nor is now any reason why we should be thus enslaved to the *Romish* Church. For in the very days of the Apostles, and some hundred years after when that Church was in its best and purest state, we of the Church of *England* rendered no such obedience to it, own'd no such dependance upon it. Neither indeed did the Bishops of that Church then claim any such power and Supremacy over us, and other foreign Churches. Wherefore as our ancestors the *British* Christians did not subject themselves to the Bishop of *Rome*, nor ever thought such a subjection necessary to their salvation, no more have we reason to do. Whatever power or precedency the Bishops of *Rome* might afterwards have in these Western parts, either by favour of the Emperor, or by consent of the Bishops amongst themselves, or most of all by their own daily encroachments (by the meer advantage of their Seat) without either law or reason, this, I say, nothing at all concerns us at this day, since all his power here is utterly abrogated and taken away by just and lawful authority, in a most mature and deliberate manner, as you before heard. And I then told you how in *Henry* the Eighth's time, before our happy Reformation, it was generally own'd and declared by the Popish Clergy themselves, that the Bishop of *Rome* had no more authority over us in *England* than the Bishop of *Jerusalem*, *Antioch*, or any other foreign Bishop. And long before that, our Laws limited and restrain'd the Popes power as it seem'd good to our Rulers. And so do Popish Princes themselves at this day, suffering him

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to have no more power or priviledg amongst them than themselves think fit. Since then the Church of *Rome*, in the very days of its primitive purity and glory, had no power over us in this Church, no more hath it at this day, nor ought to have though it were still as pure and good as at first it was, which we are far from granting. And even this much may well enough serve to shew the weakness of his argument.

L. *Very weak it is indeed, when though it should be granted, yet makes little or nothing to his purpose.*

T. But in the next place I would have you further consider (what has often before been suggested and proved) that the Church of *Rome* is at this day so degenerated and corrupted, that supposing you lived under a Popish Government, even in *Rome* it self, where the Pope is in effect King as well as Bishop, yet there it would be utterly unlawful for you to hold communion with that Church, upon the terms now required by it. For this Church, I say, is foully degenerated from its Primitive purity, both in Doctrine, Worship, and Discipline, and is thereby guilty in some sort of Apostasie, Heresie and Schism; even so far as to make her communion unlawful, since it cannot be had without a most sinful compliance with her in gross errors and corruptions.

(1) I say she is guilty of Apostasie, and have before made it evident, in that she teaches such false Doctrines as were not own'd, and uses such a corrupt way of worship as was not practised in the first ages of the Christian Church. Hereby therefore she has Apostatized or departed from that purity and integrity which she was once honoured with, when her faith was spoken of throughout the world, *Rom. 1.*

For pray consider, a Church may be guilty of a great degree of Apostasie, though she does not renounce the very name and title of Christianity. Those Churches of *Asia* to which the Messages were sent in the second and third of the *Revelation*, did not renounce the name of Christians, but yet we read that they had saine from their first love, and were so far declined, that of some of them its said, they had only a name to live, and were dead, and are severely threatened that without repentance and reformation they should be destroy'd. How the Church of *Rome* has vilely degenerated from the Primitive Church has already been shewn in many instances, particularly as to their way of Worship, whilst they pray to Angels and Saints, make use of Images, worship the Consecrated bread, take away the Cup from the people in the Communion, have their Service in an unknown Tongue, &c. Now because she is guilty of such Apostasie and corruption in her Worship, every good Christian who makes conscience of worshipping God according to his will reveal'd in his Word, may justly refuse to joyn with her therein.

(2) And not only in her Worship but in her Doctrine also she hath apostatized from the Primitive integrity, even from the true rule of Faith, the holy Word of God. And on this account she may justly be reputed guilty of *Heresie*, if by that word you understand very foul and gross errors apparently contrary to the holy Scriptures, and to the Doctrines of the Primitive Church. Such for instance are their Doctrines of the Popes Supremacy, and power of deposing Princes for Heresie, and of their Churches Infallibility, be it in Pope, Council, people, or where you will: for they are not agreed amongst themselves about it. Such also are their Doctrines of Transub-

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stantiation, Purgatory, with others the like. Now here it's a vain thing to ask by what General Council were these Errors condemned, what Fathers wrote against them, &c. since there never was any true General Council called since the Church of *Rome* broached and maintain'd these Errors. And those who are commonly honoured with the title of Fathers, viz. the Christian Writers for five or six hundred years after our Saviour, were dead and gone before that time. Though some of the most holy and learned men of those ages wherein these Errors were first published, did with great zeal and diligence oppose and testify against them, as against Transubstantiation, Image-worship, &c. But it's enough for us that these Doctrines are contrary to Scripture, and to the writings of the most ancient Fathers, and were never established by those famous Councils of old which best deserve the name of General. On account therefore of these false Doctrines also I reckon it utterly unlawful to hold communion with the *Romish* Church, since we cannot be admitted to it without professing our consent to and approbation of them.

(3) And therefore lastly, this Church is notoriously guilty of *Schism*, that is, of a groundless, sinful separation from other faithful Christians, whilst she makes such unlawful terms of Communion, that no man well informed can with a good conscience comply with. Now in order to our proving the Church of *Rome* guilty of Schism, there's no great need of answering his captious questions, whose company did she leave? where was the true Church which she forsook, &c. For though these questions are proper enough when we speak of the Schism of particular persons from the Church of which they were members, yet the case is different when we are speaking

of a whole Church its self becoming Schismatical; this is to be shewn plainest by other methods, to which I shall now apply my self, and shall also as I go along give sufficient answer even to those questions, so as shall abundantly serve to demonstrate the Church of *Rome* to be deeply guilty of this heinous sin of Schism, and that on sundry accounts.

(1.) If a particular Church shall advance her self above all other Churches, and set up her Bishop as the Supreme Governour of all other Christian Bishops and Churches, and will have no Communion with any but such as shall submit to her Supremacy, this is a Schismatical Church. For without any just ground she withdraws her self from her Sister-Churches, and gives them just cause to renounce communion with her. And this is the Case of the *Romish* Church, who makes this proud claim, and hath thereby divided her self from all other Churches that will not submit to her; which they who do, are themselves partakers with her in Schism, whilst they set up a false head of the Church, without any good warrant from Scripture, Reason or Antiquity.

(2.) When a particular Church, on account of this unjust claim of Supremacy, shall draw away the Members of other particular Churches, perswading them to separate from their own Bishops and Pastors, and to entertain such as she sets over them, she is in this also plainly Schismatical, as making horrid rents and divisions in neighbouring Churches, which else might have lived in peace and union. And those Members who are thus seduced and drawn away are also guilty of Schism, in leaving their own proper Pastors to follow Usurpers and Intruders. And this also is the case of the *Romish* Church and its adherents at this day.

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(3.) If any Church shall impose unlawful conditions upon her Members, so that they cannot live in Communion with her without being guilty of wilfull sin, then is that Church it self to be pronounced Schismatical, and not those Members who for so good reason withdraw from it. This also is the practice of the *Romish* Church, whilst she requires men to profess their belief of that which by God's Word they know to be most false, and to practise that which from the same word they are assured is unlawful and abominable.

By all this it appears then that the Church of *Rome*, whilst she cries out against all others as Schismaticks, is her self most Schismatical, in that she sets up her self above all other Churches, and will hold Communion with none but those who enslave themselves to her; draws away people from their own Pastours, and imposes unlawful terms of Communion upon all her Members. Now by this means she hath departed from the way of the Ancient Catholick Church, which never allow'd any such Usurpation, but strictly forbade it in the Canons of the most Ancient, most general and orthodox Councils. By this means she broke off from the Eastern Church which would not submit to this her Usurpation. And by this means she made it necessary for the Western Churches to withdraw from her, that they might not be defiled with her Errors and Corruptions, and to reform themselves so far as they had been defiled; and most unjust it is in her to refuse Communion with them on account of their Reformation. Yea, by this means, lastly, she hath in some sort departed from her self, I mean from that integrity and purity of Faith and Worship which once was in the Church of *Rome*, and did for some Ages continue in it. But by degrees she did

did more and more degenerate, till at length she became so polluted, that it was altogether unlawful and unsafe to retain Communion with her, lest partaking in her Sins we should also partake in the Plagues that were due to them. The gradual Apostasie of their Church is so evident, that few of their own most famous Historians have the impudence to deny it. Even *Baronius* himself, as well as many others, makes heavy complaints of that corrupt state it was fallen into, about Nine hundred or a thousand years after our Saviour, when he confesses that impudent Strumpets had got such an interest in *Rome*, that Church preferments were disposed of at their pleasure, yea, the Popedom it self: So that he says our Lord seem'd to be a sleep in the Ship, which was in danger of being overwhelmed with waves, with much more to the same purpose. And what sort of creatures were then made Popes, appears full plain by the History of their Lives written by their own Followers. Many of them such Monsters of men for all manner of villany and lewdness, that they seem to exceed the very worst of the Heathen Emperors. And can we think it impossible or unlikely for these men to fall into error and superstition who wallowed in all vice and wickedness? Can their Infallibility be secured when their virtue is lost? Will the Spirit of Truth, whom the wicked World cannot receive, dwell in such impure, defiled minds? No certainly, this Blessed Spirit is only promised to those who love our Saviour and keep his Commandments. Some of these Popes are accused, not only of the most brutish sensuality, but of Blasphemy, Infidelity, and even Atheism it self. And what a Clergy was the Church like to be filled with, when the very Heads of it were thus corrupt? And alas! what a sad influence was this like to have on the minds and manners

ners of the people? How like would their state be to that of the Jewish Church? *Isa.* 1. 4, 5, 6. *The head sick, and the heart faint; from the soles of the foot even to the head no soundness in it, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.* Or as in *Jer.* 5. last. *The Prophets prophesy falsely, the Priests bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so.* No wonder then, if whilst the Watchmen slept, the enemy came and sowed Tares. Plainly, it's no wonder in such times of ignorance and profaneness, that manifold errors and abuses both in Doctrine and Worship should creep into the Church; especially such as made for the interest and reputation of the Clergy, who having little of sanctity and true worth left, they take other methods to recommend themselves to the people; and having an ignorant credulous people to deal with, their chief business was to gratify their fond superstitious humour and to advance themselves in their esteem. And most of those things in difference betwixt us and the Church of *Rome* do plainly serve to this purpose, either to promote the wealth and honour of the Clergy, or to please the senses, and amuse the fancies of a carnal superstitious people; to keep them in ignorance, and indulge them in their sins, rather than to bring them to sound knowledge, and true repentance and godliness, as the instances oft before given do plainly shew. You see then into what a corrupt state the Church of *Rome* hath degenerated in these latter Ages; and therefore how great Reason there was to Reform our Church from Popish corruptions; and how little reason you have to desert this well-reformed Church, whereof by God's Mercy you are a Member, to run over to *Rome* which abhors all thoughts of a Reformation. Nay, you would have no reason to betake your self thither, though that Church was at this day
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236 *An Answer to a pretended Demonstration,*

as pure and orthodox as when it was first planted by the Apostles.

L. So little reason do I see for my going over to the Romish Church, that had I till now lived in communion with it, I durst not for a world continue any longer therein. And by what you have said, I plainly find, that this Evident Demonstration my Author so boasts of, is a piece of as meer sophistry as any other of his Pregnant Arguments and Unanswerable Propositions, of which he has mustered up a great number to little purpose. And whilst there is no more strength in his Reasons, I give little heed to his censures how bitter soever: For he uses much what the same harsh and uncharitable language in the conclusion of his Book that he did at the beginning, That no Salvation is to be had out of the Church of Rome; that if we will not have her for our Mother, we must not expect to have God for our Father, quoting St. Austin for it.

T. But without all Reason, whilst he applies to their particular Church, what is said of the Catholick Church of Christ. But nothing more common in their mouths than the Roman Catholick Church, as if there were no true Christians or Catholicks in the World but those of their own party; which how unreasonable, as well as uncharitable it is, we have before seen.

L. Certainly it is both in a very high degree, whilst he dare boldly doom all men to damnation except his Roman Catholicks, whom he looks upon as the only favourites of God, and heirs of Heaven: For he says, they cannot be in the least danger of missing the inheritance of God's Children in the next Life, if they have lived as they believed.

T. What their condition shall be let us leave to the just Judge of all men, remembring the Apostles saying, Not he who commendeth himself is approved, but he

he whom the Lord commendeth. How far the ill education and ignorance of any of them may serve to excuse or lessen their faults, it becomes not us to determine. But as to our selves we may safely assert, that for us to go against the light of Gods Word and our own Consciences, in professing their Errors, and joyn- ing in their corrupt Worship, would be a piece of in- excusable and damnable wickedness: Whereas on the other hand we may rest fully satisfied and assured, that if we sincerely believe the Holy Gospel, which is at this day purely and plainly taught in our Church, and live in strict and stedfast obedience to the precepts of it, which are dayly inculcated upon us, we shall most certainly obtain that Eternal Salvation which in this Gospel is promised to all such obedient Believers. Of this we are as sure as that God is true: for Heaven and Earth shall sooner fail than one tittle of his Holy Word on which we depend.

L. *Whilst we depend on this Word, certainly we shall never be deceived or disappointed. But methinks it's very bold Language, and little better than Blasphemy, with which my Author concludes his Book, when he says that his Roman Catholicks may, at the hour of death, with confidence use those words of an Ancient Writer, O Lord, if it be Error which we have believed, we are deceived by thee: for thou hast confirmed these things to us by such signs and prodigies as could not be done but by thee; with more to that purpose.*

T. This can only with truth be spoken concerning the Christian Religion, to which God bare witness by mighty Signs and Wonders. But to apply it to the false Doctrines of Popery, is indeed no better than Blasphemy: For neither our Saviour or his Apostles ever taught these Doctrines; nor did God ever work a Miracle for the confirming of them.

L. *Sure-*

238 *An Answer to a pretended Demonstration, &c.*

L. Surely it would argue more modesty to suspect the weakness of their own judgment, and better to examine their Cause, rather than to charge God himself with deceiving them if they are deceived.

T. Very true, but you know the Proverb, *None so bold as those that are blind*: otherwise certainly they have reason enough to suspect that Cause to be very weak which is supported by no better Arguments than these which your Author hath produced; who yet no doubt hath given us the best he could devise of his own head, or meet with in their Writers.

C H A P. V.

Of the number of Sacraments, with some other things briefly discusst, and the conclusion of the whole.

L. **S**IR, I am now come to the end of my little Book, and ought therefore to put an end to the trouble I have given you; yet before we part, will you please to satisfy me in one thing, of which I find no mention in my Author.

T. I shall willingly, when I hear what it is.

L. 'Tis concerning the number of Sacraments: for Papists charge it as a great defect upon our Church, that we have but two, whilst they say they have seven.

T. How little reason there is for this Charge will soon appear, if you consider, that as to four of these five which the Papists pretend to have more than we, though we give them not the name of Sacraments, yet we have the things themselves. And as to the fifth, there is not the least reason that we should receive, or they retain it. For your fuller satisfaction I shall name them to you; and in a few words make good what I have said.

L. Pray will you please to do it, and I shall trouble you with no more questions hereafter.

T. To the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper, which both we and they receive, they do further add Confirmation, Holy Orders, Marriage, Penance and extreme Unction. Now, as to the name of Sacrament, it's a vain thing to dispute about words, till we are agreed of the sense and meaning of them. For if by Sacrament they mean any sacred rite

rite or usage that may signify some grace or some good duty, or by way of allusion may serve to some good purpose in Religion, then instead of Seven, they may perhaps reckon Seventeen Sacraments or many more. And in this large and looser sense the Ancients commonly made use of the word; giving the name of Sacrament to many things relating to Religion, which are any way mystical or significant, yea, frequently they call our Religion it self a Sacrament or Mystery. And if they of the Church of *Rome* will use the word in this large sense, and so stile the several things now mentioned, Sacraments, let them enjoy their liberty, I think it's not worth contending about. Only let them not say that we despise the things themselves, because we think it not so fit to give them this name. For by a Sacrament we understand (as it's exprest in our Church-Catechism) *an outward sign of an inward spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ, as a means whereby we receive the same Grace, and a pledge to assure us thereof.* Now in this sense we say, that only Baptism and the Lords-Supper are properly to be called Sacraments, being ordained by Christ's exprest command, as a way and means for the bestowing of his Grace upon all that duly partake of them. These are as it were the Seals of the Covenant of Grace (as Divines use to stile them) which all Christians, if they have opportunity, are obliged to make use of. For hereby we do in a solemn manner profess our selves to be Christ's Disciples, and engage our selves to walk in all holy obedience to his Laws, and so make a Covenant with him; and upon our sincerity herein, we receive Grace from God to enable us for our duty, and have an assurance of his favour, and of all the blessings that flow from it, in and through Jesus Christ. Thus hath our Lord plainly ordain'd, that all
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who believe in him should be Baptized with Water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, for the profession of our Faith in him, and for the receiving the remission of our Sins with spiritual Regeneration. Thus did he institute the holy Communion, commanding all Christians to celebrate the same in remembrance of him, for a commemoration of his death till his second coming; and hereby we partake of the Body and Blood of Christ, for the refreshing and strengthening of our Souls. Plainly then you see how these two Sacraments were ordained by Christ himself, for the use of all Christians, to be as it were the badges of their profession, that hereby they might solemnly testify their consent to the Covenant of Grace, and at the same time may receive the blessings of this Covenant. But now this cannot be said of those other things which the *Papists* call Sacraments, how useful soever any of them may be in other respects. For though we call them not Sacraments, yet we do not in the least deny whatever of goodness or usefulness is to be found in them, but do our selves, I say, embrace them, and make use of them (all but one) to such good ends and purposes as they serve for, which will easily appear by a brief survey of them.

First, As to *Confirmation*, you may see in what esteem it is in our Church, by the Office appointed for it in the Liturgy, where it is expressly ordered that those who are come to years of discretion, and well instructed in the Principles of Religion, so that they are capable of taking upon themselves the vow that was made for them in Baptism, that they should openly, before the Bishop and the Congregation, make profession of their Faith, and ratify and confirm their

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Baptismal Vow; whereupon the Bishop lays his hands upon them (according to the most ancient usage in blessing and praying for a person) and begs of God to strengthen and increase in them the Graces of his holy Spirit, that they may continue for ever in his Service. And this practice of Confirmation many of our Divines, who have written about it, do highly commend, as a very laudable, useful and ancient constitution, and which (if the Rules of our Church about it were more duly observed) mightily tends to the promoting of knowledge and godliness; even much more than as it is practised in the Church of *Rome*, where it's administred to Infants not long after Baptism: whereas it seems plainly designed in our Church for those who are of a competent Age, that they may take their Baptismal Vow upon themselves, which if they do seriously and understandingly, it must needs make the deeper impression on their minds, more firmly oblige them to the observance of it, and better qualify them for the assistance of God's Grace, and render them more fit for the Holy Communion, where again they solemnly renew the same Vow. Yet all this while we do not reckon Confirmation to be a Sacrament (in the sense our Church uses that word) nor do we equal it with Baptism and the Lords-Supper, since we find no such express institution of it by our Saviour in the Gospel, nor such promises of Grace made upon the use of it. Nor therefore does our Church think that the want of it will be any hindrance to the Salvation of baptized Infants, who dye before they are confirmed.

As for *Holy Orders* there is much less reason to give the name of Sacrament to them, since they belong to
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only one sort of men, who are thereby devoted, not to Christianity (that was done at Baptism) but to the work of the Ministry. In the mean time no body sure can be ignorant of the practice of our Church in this matter; how careful she is in conferring holy Orders on all those whom she admits to minister in holy things: And with what gravity and solemnity this Office is performed, may be seen in those publick forms that are appointed in our Liturgy, for the ordaining of Bishops, Priests and Deacons.

As for *Marriage*, though we grant that in it is signified the Mystical Union betwixt Christ and his Church, yet do we not call it a Sacrament, nor see any reason so to do, considering the definition of a Sacrament given before. But yet we believe it to be an honourable state instituted by God in the time of Man's innocency; yea, with the Apostle we judge it to be *honourable in all men*, Priests as well as others, St. Peter himself having been a Married Man: Whilst the Church of *Rome* forbids her Clergy to Marry, thereby seeming to have no great esteem for it: She extols a single life more highly above it than there seems good reason for; and reckons them a more holy sort of persons than others who abstain from Marriage, whilst yet they call it a Sacrament, it's well if they be not more unholy.

But I hasten to that of *Penance*. Here indeed we do not with the Church of *Rome* exact from men a particular confession of all their private faults, nor send them on long Pilgrimages to this or that Saint, nor make them go so far barefoot or barehead, nor oblige them to give themselves so many lashes, or to say over so many *Pater-*

nofters and *Ave-maries*: but rather we prefs upon them the great duty of Repentance and Reformation, without which they cannot be pardoned; that they should confefs their fins to God with shame and sorrow, speedily and thorowly forfaking the fame. In fome Cafes alfo there is a publick Penance enjoyn'd by the difcipline of the Church, that notorious offenders fhould openly acknowledge their crimes, beg pardon of God and the Congregation, profefs their sorrow and purpofes of amendment, requesting the prayers of Minifter and People on their behalf. But this while, we fee no Reason to give the name of Sacrament to mens expreffing their repentance. As to any bodily austerities that may tend to the mortification of fin, or to a fort of holy Revenge on our felves for it, our Church gives no particular precept about them, but leaves every man to his own difcretion, as the Gofpel has done: but ſhe moſt earneſtly calls them to *break off their fins by righteouſneſs, and their iniquities by ſhewing mercy to the poor*: and very uſeful it is for them to adviſe oft with their ſpiritual Guide.

You ſee then as to theſe four which Papifts call Sacraments, that our Church cannot in the leaſt be charged with any defect for not having the things themſelves: for we both uſe them all, and give them due eſteem, though we do not think the title of Sacraments, in our ſenſe of the word, properly to belong to them.

As for the laſt thing mention'd, that of *Extreme Unction*, which is an anointing of ~~Dying~~ *Dying* perſons with Oil conſecrated for that purpoſe, we are ſo far from accounting it a Sacrament, that we do not at all uſe it
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in our Church, nor see any reason why we should. That which *Papists* chiefly alledge for it, is from *St. James*, Chap. 5. 14, 15. *Is any man sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* Now it seems most probable that this custom was to last but during the time of miraculous Cures, in which sometimes Oil was made use of, as *Mark* 6. 13. though some think there might be a medicinal virtue in the Oil it self. But however it be, it affords not a sufficient ground for what is now practised in the Church of *Rome*. For in those times you see it was intended for the health of the body, whereas the anointing amongst *Papists* is pretended to be for the benefit of their Souls, and is commonly used when they perceive no hopes of recovery, which is a meer device of their own, there being no command of God for it, nor any promise of Spiritual benefit by this kind of *Unction*. Thus you may still perceive how little reason they have to blame us for having only Two Sacraments whilst they boast of Seven.

L. *I plainly see they have no reason for it, since whatever is good and useful in these things we retain and enjoy, though we do not call them Sacraments.*

T. But whilst they falsely accuse us of defectiveness herein, it becoms them well to consider their own guilt in taking away one half of a true Sacrament, I mean the wine in the Communion from the people, so plainly contrary to our Saviours institution and the universal practice of the Church for many ages after. Such a material defect as this is a most pal-

pable blemish to their Church, and cannot be wiped off by their new-fangled Doctrine of Concomitancy, devised for the purpose, of which I have formerly spoken. And even this is a very good reason to keep people from entering into the Church of *Rome*, in that they cannot there partake of the Sacrament of the Lords-Supper, according to our Saviours appointment, one half of it being kept back from them.

L. And as great reason you have shew'd there is to keep out of their Communion, in respect of that part of the Sacrament which they do administer, I mean the consecrated bread: for this they will have given to none but those who believe it to be God, and worship it before they eat it.

T. You speak a very great truth; and it may well seem matter of wonder, that ever a society of men calling themselves Christians, should have so little regard to Christs own institution and to the peace and welfare of his Church, as to make such alterations in the administering this holy Sacrament, that no Christian who is well-informed can with a good Conscience partake of it with them. For I must declare plainly, I do not see how a man can do it, without being guilty of Idolatry in Worshipping the Bread, and of consenting to Sacrilege in being deprived of the Cup.

L. Two such horrid crimes that one would think should startle any man that has not a blind mind, or a scared Conscience.

T. The prejudice of education I confess is very great, and few people ever get above it, which makes it

it less strange for those that are born and bred amongst *Papists* to swallow these things without scruple; especially considering in what ignorance their people commonly are kept: but for *Protestants* who have any knowledge in Religion, any reverence for the holy Scriptures, that ever any of these should revolt from their own Church, and break over so many difficulties, to get into Communion with the Church of *Rome* in all her corruptions, may justly be matter of wonder and astonishment.

L. 'Tis strange how they can ever bring their Consciences to such a compliance.

T. God only knows the hearts of men, and to his judgment we must leave them: But methinks the Case is so plain, that no man of competent understanding, who considers things impartially, and hath a due regard to God's Word, and a sincere desire to please God and save his Soul, can easily be drawn to approve of those palpable errors and absurdities, those scandalous and grossly evil practices, which are at this day taught and imposed in the *Roman Church*. And I think it may come to pass through the wise and just Judgment of Almighty God, that he hath permitted this corrupt Church so foully to degenerate in some particular instances, the better to preserve honest and well-meaning Souls from being carried away with her power, pomp and glory; and from being deluded by those fine pretences and subtle insinuations, which her Agents make use of to draw Disciples after them.

L. So far there may be a good effect of those bad things wherewith that Church is defiled.

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T. God grant the notoriousness of them may so appear to all, that those who are yet innocent may be preserved from being seduced and infected, and those who are guilty may become sensible of their sin and danger, and do their utmost to reform a Church so polluted, or speedily leave her if she hates to be reformed. But for your self, I hope, after all that hath been said, there is not the least danger of your forsaking that sound and good Church whereof you are a Member, for so corrupt a one as that of *Rome* is at this day.

L. By the grace of God I hope there is not. For I never could incline to think such a change reasonable; but by the discourses now had with you, I am more fully perswaded of the utter unlawfulness, the folly and infinite hazard of it. And whilst I have the use of my reason I am confident I shall always be of the same mind. And I trust I shall never be so far forsaken of God, as to act contrary to my own settled judgment and conscience.

T. God forbid you should. And since what hath been said may with Gods blessing be sufficient to secure you from deserting your own Church for the *Romish*, I have no inclination to trouble you with any more points in controversie betwixt us and them.

L. I suppose you have spoken to the most material ready.

T. I think I have so. But there are some others which have been agitated with great heat, such particularly as about Justification, wherein it consists, and on what condition it is obtain'd, whether by faith or works;

works ; and also concerning the merit of good works, with others the like. About which many of their Authors have written at a very extravagant rate, and perhaps some of our own have run into a contrary extreme ; especially at the beginning of the Reformation, when, in the heat of opposition, they said some such things as cannot well be defended. And sometimes there has been much wrangling about words, one side taking them in this sense, the other in that. To instance only in Justification, The Popish Writers generally mean thereby (though very improperly) the same as Sanctification, which hath occasion'd much confusion in the Disputations on this subject. All that I shall say of it is this, Let it be granted that it is only for Christs sake that we are pardon'd and saved, and we shall readily acknowledg that in order to our obtaining these benefits, there is necessarily required on our part that faith which works by love both to God and our Neighbour, and produces a sincere obedience to all the precepts of the Gospel : *As to the merit of good works*, if the word *merit* be taken strictly and properly, it's most unreasonable to assert it. For certainly our works which are so very mean and imperfect, which are performed in the time of this short life, and which in duty we are bound to perform, which add nothing to God, and are done by the assistance of his Grace, these works cannot in strict reckoning deserve to be rewarded with eternal glory. The holy Scripture most plainly tells us, *That our goodness extends not to God, that he hath no need of us, nor receives any benefit from us ; when we have done all that was required we are to account our selves unprofitable servants ; that we have nothing but what we received from him ; that though death be properly the wages of sin,*
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yet eternal life is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ, &c. But yet on the other hand, considering the gracious promise which God hath made to all true believers, that continue patient in well-doing, on this account we may safely grant that an holy life shall be most richly rewarded with everlasting happiness; and good men, in a large and more modest sense of the word, may be said to deserve it, in that they have by Gods grace performed the condition on which it was promised. In this sense the Ancients commonly used the words *merit* and *reward*. So in holy Scripture we read of a *recompence of reward* (though such a one as is of *grace* not *strict debt*) and true Christians are said to be *worthy* of this happiness, *Rev.* 3. 4. and to have a *right* to enter into life, that is, according to the tenour of Gods gracious Covenant, *Revel.* 22. 14. Wherefore if they of the *Romish* Church will be satisfied with such concessions as these (as perhaps the more modest of them will) there need be no contention about these matters. And some very learned and judicious Writers of our own and other Reformed Churches, when they have come to state the controversie clearly and impartially, have freely acknowledged, that the difference betwixt us in these and some other points is not so great as some hot Disputants on both sides would make it. However, I shall not further enlarge on them; for it is not my business to display all the Errors of the *Roman* Church, (nor indeed is it in my power) much less do I desire to aggravate things, and make any of their opinions seem worse than really they are. But my design all along hath been to give you such a true and just account of things as might fix you in communion with the Church of *England*, and preserve you from any inclination, or thought of going

ing over to *Rome* ; and that in brief for such plain reasons as these, even because our Church is a sound part of the Catholick Church, and has full authority over you by the Laws of God and the Land ; and since here all things necessary to Salvation may be enjoy'd, and nothing is required that may be an hindrance to it. Whereas on the other hand the Church of *Rome* has no jurisdiction over us in *England*, nor ought to have ; and does also propose most unjust terms of Communion, with which you cannot comply, without apparent hazard of your Salvation ; since she requires all her members to embrace and profess gross Errors for Divine Truths, and enjoins the doing of many things as necessary duties, which are very heinous sins against Gods express commands.

L. These reasons are indeed both plain and weighty, such that I can easily understand and, do feel their strength, and by Gods assistance shall ever remain under the power of them.

T. I hope you will so. And since you are so sensible of their truth and force, give me leave before we part, to beseech you always so to keep up the sense of them, that you may thereby be secured from all attempts that may be made upon you, not only by those of the Church of Rome, but by such as are commonly called Protestant Dissenters, though indeed by their separating principles and practices, I think they dissent from all Protestant Churches whatever. Let none of these then ever draw you into the way of separation from the Church of England, under pretence of bringing you into purer societies, where the word is more powerfully preached, and Sacraments more purely administred.

L. I hope I shall never be wrought upon by such pre-
 sences as these : for whilst in our Church we enjoy all things
 needful to Salvation, and have nothing sinful imposed upon
 us, surely it ought to be esteemed a very pure and sound
 Church in whose communion I ought to remain. Nor can I
 see the least reason why I should disobey my Superiours, and
 break the peace of this Church, and separate from it, to seek
 after I know not what greater purity in this corner or
 that.

T. Keep you to this, and you will not easily be sha-
 ken. For let *Papists* or Separatists object what they
 please, most certain it is that in our Church the Go-
 spel of Christ is most plainly and powerfully preached,
 the holy Sacraments purely administred, and the Wor-
 ship of Almighty God gravely and solemnly perfor-
 med ; our Prayers and Praises offered up to the true
 God in the name of Jesus Christ ; framed according
 to the will of God revealed in his Word, and express
 in our own Tongue, that so all the people may easily
 understand them, be duly affected with them, and
 heartily say *Amen* to them. What then should hinder
 any good Christian from joyning with a Church so
 well constituted, in a constant, reverent attendance
 upon the Word, Prayers and Sacraments, which may
 with so much freedom and lawfulness here be en-
 joyed ?

L. I am so far from knowing any reason to the con-
 trary that I think we have cause to embrace this priviledg
 with great readines and joy, and with most hearty thank-
 fulness to Almighty God for his singular mercy, in affording
 us these blessed advantages above most other Nations in the
 world.

T. And

T. And yet you shall often hear some people, either ignorantly or maliciously, crying out of Popery, Superstition, Will-worship, and I know not what, which ought not to move you in the least.

L. *There's no reason to be moved with bare noise and ill words, whilst I know nothing amongst us that deserves them.*

T. It's plain there is not; for when you come to examine the matter, their greatest objections against us are, that we have Forms of Prayer; (there were more reason to object it as a fault if we had none) that we kneel at the Communion (and why may we not as well as at our Prayers?) That the Minister sometimes wears a Surplice (why not as well as a Gown?) That he makes a transient sign of the Cross over the Childs forehead after Baptism (and what hurt is in doing it, more than in speaking the words of lifting him under the banner of a Crucified Saviour?) Are not these very weighty matters to make such noise and disturbance about?

L. *I have heard these things talked against by some people, but never met with any solid argument to prove them sinful.*

T. No, nor I am confident ever will. Very easie it were to answer the common objections against them, and to shew the lawfulness of them, whilst there is nothing to be found in Gods Word to the contrary; and *where there is no law, there's no transgression.* But something of this nature I have done elsewhere, and you may find many excellent Discourses to this purpose

pose written by the Divines of our Church, both formerly and very lately. Only pray consider what an unreasonable thing it is for any to pretend, that they have as good ground to separate from our Church, as our Church it self had to separate from *Rome*. Surely there is a very plain and vast difference in the case, since (as I have often told you) the Church of *Rome* has nothing to do with us in *England*, and she also imposed things unlawful as conditions of Communion. Neither of which can be justly pleaded by our Separatists. For I hope the authority of our Church and State extends to those of our own Nation; and I reckon that our obedience in this case is bound upon us by the express commands of God himself, which enjoins us to be subject to the higher Powers, to Kings and all in authority under them; to obey them that have the Spiritual rule over us, and watch for our souls; to have respect to the very custom of the Church wherein we live, to consult for the peace of it, and to avoid all factions and divisions. By such precepts I reckon we are obliged to submit to lawful authority, requiring of us nothing but what is lawful. And nothing else doth our Church require: for there is nothing in her Prayers or Sacraments contrary to the Word of God. This holy Word, neither directly or by any good consequence, forbids forms of Prayer, or kneeling at the Communion, which is all that the people are concerned in, for as to the Cross and Surplice they belong to the Minister. Now one would wonder how ever any man should fancy that a Prayer becomes unlawful by my knowing it beforehand, and having often used it, one would think this should rather recommend it. Or why should it seem unlawful to kneel in reverence to God, when I receive
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from him such great blessings as are represented and bestow'd in the Lords-Supper, and am praying that I may effectually partake of them? Are these things to be compared with what the Church of *Rome* requires of its members? Is a form of Prayer to the true God, like worshipping an Image, or praying to an Angel or Saint? (which in other words is but to ask whether saying the Lords-prayer be as much a fault as praying to the Virgin *Mary*?) Is our kneeling to God at the Communion like adoring the Host, which our Church expressly declares her abhorrence of as gross Idolatry. But besides all this, it cannot so fitly be said that our Church separated from the Church of *Rome* (to which she ow'd no obedience) but rather that she only Reformed her self from such errors and corruptions as the *Romish* Church was infected with, and had spread the infection amongst her neighbours. But Papists properly were the Separatists, who refused to hold communion with our Church after it was Reformed, though this Reformation was wrought in a regular manner and by just authority, as I have before shewn. And yet after all, shall this our Church be stiled Popish, when those holy men who were chief Reformers of it, and who composed and used those Prayers which are objected against, laid down their lives many of them for a testimony against Popery? Yea and all other Reformed Churches have profest their great honour for our Church, their communion with it, and have as occasion has been offered, declared against those who separate from it? yea the most learned and judicious Nonconformists themselves have heretofore with great zeal preach'd and written against such separation, and some of them more lately. So that they who separate from us, and set up
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Churches of their own gathering, in opposition to those established by Law, seem to have espoused a very desperate cause, which has neither Scripture, Reason nor good authority to defend it. Strange! that the Church of *England*, which hath generally been accounted the glory and bulwark of the Reformation, the envy and vexation of the Papist, that yet she her self should be deserted and condemned by those who come out of her own bowels, as a Popish Church! O that there were many more such Popish Churches in the world! Or rather, O that all Christian Churches were so thoroughly Reformed from Popery! In how happy a state would Christendom then be! Wherefore, again let me beseech you, as you have any regard to the peace and prosperity of Church and State, and to the interest of Religion amongst us, see that you vehemently abhor all thoughts of Separation, utterly reject all temptations to it. For Religions sake, I say, for it's too too apparent how much this suffers by our divisions as well as the publick weal; whilst we are broken into parties and factions, it threatens ruin to the Kingdom thus divided against it self, yea and to the *Kingdom of God* also that is amongst us; for this consists in *righteousness and peace, and that joy in the Holy Ghost*, which flows from charity and concord. But where there is *strife and envy*, there will be *confusion and disorder, and every evil work*, censures and slanders, hatred and malice, sedition and rebellion, biting and devouring each other, till at length, without the infinite mercy of God, we shall be consumed one of another, or by a common enemy. Wherefore I will add, If you have any zeal against Popery, see that you live in strict communion with the Church of *England*, as now by Law established. For nothing can be more directly

rectly framed in opposition to Popery than the whole constitution of our Church ; and should this be broken to pieces, to what shall we crumble ? whither shall we run ? who can tell us ? nay, who cannot tell what in all likelihood will be the event ? If in a besieged City there be several factions, that in fury against each other break down their own walls, and throw open their Gates, are they not like to fall into the hands of their enemies, who are watching for such an advantage ? whatever abhorrence our Dissenters have for Popery, they cannot do a thing more pleasing to the Papist, or more serviceable to his cause, than to reproach the Church of *England* as Popish, and set up themselves as a party against it. By this means they give their assistance for the weakning and destroying of that Church which the Papist on the other hand hath so long been endeavouring to undermine and subvert ; by whose overthrow though the Papist might be exalted, yet themselves most probably (and most justly too) would be crushed in pieces by its ruins. But I fear I have tired you.

L. So far from it, that I am greatly pleased with this your serious and earnest advice, which may the better secure me against all temptations to separation, if hereafter I should meet with them. But I hope, through the grace of God, I shall always live so mindful of my duty to yield obedience to my Rulers in all things lawful, and to do my utmost for preservation of the peace both of Church and State, that I shall never be drawn into any separating party or faction, which oft occasions much disturbance to both. Moreover, I thank God, I am so fully convinced, not only of the lawfulness and duty, but of the great and unspeakable advantage of living in

communion with the Church of England, that I feel not in my self the least inclination to depart from it. For here we have the Holy Scriptures, the food of our souls, freely allow'd us, and daily read amongst us; very frequently they are explain'd to us, and our duty from them inforced upon us in useful, practical Sermons. Our prayers, I am satisfied, are holy and good, such, that if it be not our own faults, we may use them with much devotion. The Holy Sacraments are here administred according to our Saviours own appointment, so far as he hath exprest it. And as to any Ceremonies or circumstances of Worship, established by the prudence and authority of the Church, I know nothing but what is very innocent and lawful, very grave and decent, agreeable to the solemnity of Divine Worship. So that I am ready to say with St. Peter, Lord whither shall we go? since here we have the words of eternal life: here we have the way to it plainly discovered, and the means for attaining it plentifully afforded.

T. I am very glad to hear you discourse so honestly and judiciously, and I pray God keep you ever in this good mind, and grant that you and all other Christians may make a right use of all those means and advantages which are here afforded in order to their Salvation. To which purpose, before I dismiss you, give me leave with all possible earnestness to beseech you not to satisfy your self with holding the true Religion, and being of a true Church, whose Doctrine and Worship is holy and good, but see above all things that you your self be a truly religious and good man. Else what shall it avail you to be a member of the best and purest Church in the world, if you be an impure, unholy person,

person, no true living member of Jesus Christ? Though Loyalty to our Prince, and Conformity to the Church are great duties, yet these will not excuse our disobedience to any of Christs Laws, who is the King of Kings, and Head of the Church. What though we are not Papists, Hereticks, or Schismaticks, yet if we be wicked and loose livers, we are in a worse condition than even Heathens and Infidels. The inordinate love of money may damn a man as well as the worship of an Idol of Gold or Silver; yea, Covetousness is stiled Idolatry, and so is voluptuousness too; for the sensual man is said to *make his belly his god*. To prefer the Creature before the Creator, and the pleasures of sin before the joyes of Heaven, may well be reckoned amongst the most vile and damnable errors and heresies. He that lives in malice and envy, that hates his brother, and reviles, oppresses or cheats him, is a most factious and schismatical man; for he makes a rent and schism in the body of Christ, and is broken off from it, by being destitute of that charity which is the bond of perfection, by which fellow Christians are united one to another, and all of them to Christ their Head. Let it not suffice therefore that you live in an excellent Church, where you have the Word, Prayers and Sacraments, according to Christs appointment, but see that you diligently improve them for the promoting of good life, this being the great end for which they were appointed. Joyn constantly in the Prayers with great reverence and devotion, and then live according to your Prayers and professions. Firmly believe the Articles of your Creed, and let your faith work by love. Attend to the reading and preaching of Gods Word with care and seriousness, and see that you be not an Hearer only but a Doer of

the Word. Often reflect upon your Baptismal Vow, and be faithful to it in fighting against the world, the flesh and the Devil, most entirely devoting your self to the service of the blessed God, and his Son Jesus in leading a godly, righteous and sober life. Frequently renew these Vows at the Holy Communion, and there most thankfully commemorate the death of our blessed Saviour, *Who loved us and gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.* Let his love constrain you to obedience; and let the remembrance of his Death and Resurrection mortifie all sin in you, and quicken you to newness of life. Let the terrors of the Lord perswade you to repentance, and new obedience, and let the hopes of eternal glory make you patient, constant and chearful in well doing. In a word, see that you truly *Fear God, Honour and obey the King, love your brethren, and live in peace and charity with all men; herein continually exercising your self to have a conscience void of offence toward God and man.* By such a truly religious and holy life, you will adorn your profession, bring honour to the Church, gain upon its enemies, or stop their mouths, and even force them to acknowledge that God is in you of a truth, that certainly this is a true Christian Church, whose members are of such a truly Christian temper and behaviour. By this means you will best be secured from all that lye in wait to deceive, whether Papists or Separatists. Your own inward sense and relish of Divine things will assure you that true Religion consists not in bodily exercises, how pompous, costly and laborious soever. Nor will you falsifie the power of Godliness to be manifested, by wrangling against such Forms and Ceremonies as are in themselves no hindrance to Spiritual Worship and
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Devotion, but may be an help. Yea by this means you will certainly obtain eternal happiness, which can no other way be secured. For being of the true Church, will never save him that is not a true Christian, which no wicked man is, nor will right opinions make amends for bad manners. Whereas he that heartily and honestly endeavours in all things to know and do the will of God shall either be preserved from error, or from being much hurt by it. For those mistakes which neither proceed from a vicious temper of mind, nor lead to any evil practice in a mans life, are not like to be very hurtful to himself or to others. To conclude then, *Let your conversation in all respects be such as becomes the Gospel of Christ, and be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, being assured that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

L. I do again and again return you most hearty thanks for all the good counsel you have given me, and do sincerely resolve by Gods help to follow it, for which purpose I beg the assistance of your prayers.

T. That I do faithfully promise you, and do also desire yours, that I my self may observe the directions I have given, and not contradict them by an evil example. And God grant that all those every where, who take Christs name into their mouths may depart from all iniquity. And may the Holy Spirit of Truth lead us all into, and keep us in those ways of truth and peace, and serious holiness which may bring honour to God and to our Religion, and procure us true comfort here, and eternal glory hereafter, through the mercies of God in Jesus Christ, to whose guidance I commit you, and bid you heartily farewell.

L. God

L. God Almighty hear your Prayers, bless your Instructions, and plentifully reward you for all your kindness and pains, and grant us an happy meeting in that blessed world above, where we shall never part more. Farewell, Dear Sir.

FINIS.

